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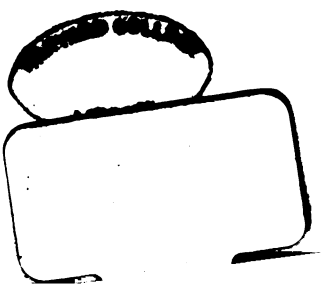

Mrs. Goldsmith

M & V
130

Mrs. Goldsmith

MARMADUKE OF TENNESSEE

They ran the gauntlet of fire

MARMADUKE OF TENNESSEE

BY

Edward Cummings

ILLUSTRATED BY

FRANK E. SCHOONOVER

CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG & CO.
1914

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MARMADUKE OF TENNESSEE

CHAPTER I

EAGLE BEND

NO ONE, I think, ever had more pleasure in the place he lived in than Henry Marmaduke. The house was of red brick, old and plain and pleasing; it stood remote from the turnpike upon a hill, proudly builded among towering oaks. Behind it the river made a curve of many miles; the traveler on the stage road could mark its course by the procession of white-armed sycamores around its shores. Enfolded thus lay a fine estate of forest, field, and sandy bottom, which the Marmadukes had owned for many years. It went by the name of Eagle Bend.

As Henry rode home, on the day this story begins, he waved his hand at the house, whose windows flashed back at him through the trees with fire from the west: it was like a greeting between friends. For him the old home, conspicuous and noble among its great oaks, had always a splendid manorial

dignity and charm. When in boyhood he read of ancient trees, or a fine old mansion, or the Forest of Arden, it was always Eagle Bend that furnished the shifting scenery and setting. The Master of Ravenswood walked with Lucy Ashton in this forest; Robin Hood and Sir William Wallace found in these thickets a safe retreat; Daniel Boone cut his name here on a beech, and Orlando hung up verses; the hills echoed to the notes of Roland's horn, and gleamed with the shields of Arthur's Knights; Ulysses was cast naked ashore here and slept warm in a bed of fallen leaves; Dick Turpin, Davy Crockett, Rob Roy McGregor and the whole immortal company of heroes peopled the woods of the plantation and galloped at night upon the highway. Poetry haunted the place, like the call of doves from the careening trees, through whose green, green leaves the sunlight filtered. Byron was known there, and Sir Walter; and an early riser, seeking roses on some summer morning, might find Wordsworth left overnight to mildew on a bench.

Young Marmaduke had always idealized his home, and admired and loved it, but he admired and loved not only his home, but everything that was his. Above all, he loved his friends. Of these he had an immensely large number — he had three.

First was David Romilly. Between these two there had been since childhood a warm comradeship, marked by a certain gentleness and courtesy. A

thoughtful observer, noting the two young men together (and they were very young, I must not forget to insist on that) would have fancied, from the dignity of their intercourse, that they were well-met strangers who were much pleased with each other's company. They had studied law together, and upon their admission to the bar had formed a partnership. They had learned at college — along with two other friends — enough of ancient lore, and Greek and Latin, to be able to make classical allusions to the towers of Ilium and unhappy Dido, and to speak familiarly of Hannibal and Mark Antony. They raided the borderlands of English literature, and they burned their lamps far into many a midnight, filled with adolescent enthusiasm, and a noble rage for intellectual endeavor.

Next there was Lockspur — Dr. Jack Lockspur, of the United States Army. There was no aloofness about Lockspur. He was familiarity incarnate, his idea of a friend being like Thackeray's — something which he could use, a lounge upon which he could recline at length and take his ease. He was a slender youth with very dark blue eyes; he wore gold-rimmed spectacles, a black pointed beard and, when he was not laughing outright, a look of great solemnity. He was eager and outspoken, and he was not altogether approved of in Spanishburg, where he had passed his sophomorical youth, and where he was looked upon as erratic, self-sufficient

and indolent. This view of the young man did him no great injustice, but it should be recorded that it was not shared by the exiguous group of people who knew him well. In the course of time he acquired a realizing sense of the value of practical industry, forsook the bypaths in which he had rambled with his pipe and book, and — upon the toss of a penny — chose a profession. At the time this story opens he was a medical officer in the army, and Marmaduke had offered him a post in the Regiment. He had replied as follows:

MY DEAR MARMADUKE:

I have your kind invitation to become your Regimental Surgeon, which is accepted, *of course*. I have long ago resigned, and just as soon as I can leave here I'll start for Spanishburg, and as soon as I reach Spanishburg I'll ride as fast as a wild horse can gallop to Eagle Bend. Gad, I am filled with exultation to think of foregathering for the first time in a Lustrum with you at Eagle Bend — with you and old Romilly, and Dick Upshaw! By your kind accommodation we'll drink many a bumper to the memory of Old Times.

'Tis said that no one looks back upon his youth so tenderly as a young man, and I, who am still a youth (for what is twenty-five?) remember lovingly the old dreams and the old friends. It seems the peaceful civilian days are about over. Life has been a tranquil Journey through quiet river waters, with amethystine vistas up and down and the Halcyon brooding on its nest by the sand. Ah, those were brave times — days of saddle-talk and laughter and books and much tobacco smoke — and nights of Ambition that burned

in the veins, and dreams of Adventure, and Women, and Fame.

None of those dreams have come true, so far, but here's our chance at last — War! Bloody War! Adventures are to the adventurous, as Ixion told Minerva: and here's for Adventure!

The sight of you will be good for my eyes, which are sore with seeing people I do not love, and meantime and all time,

I am, most joyfully,
Thy friend,
JACK LOCKSPUR.

The third was old Dick Upshaw. He was not older than the others; they were all in the neighborhood of twenty-four or five. But Upshaw was always called old Dick.

He was one of the biggest and quite the best-natured man in Spanishburg — a serene and portly gentleman with sandy-red hair. He had a plain blue eye, and a leathery complexion which grew fiery red when he drank. His sandy moustache was very ragged and jagged from his habit of ragging and jagging it with thumb and forefinger. When you talked to him he would keep nodding his head and solemnly shutting his eyes and yanking his moustache, and nodding and nodding, as though to say: "I understand you perfectly: nothing you have to say surprises *me*." He led a commonplace life in Spanishburg, patiently transcribing for his newspaper the commonplace events of the day. As he wrote it, Dick Upshaw's English was always correct,

and even elegant, but his spoken language was another affair; he favored the homely *patois* of the backwoods. At intervals he would sell out the *Gazette,* and with an overcoat and a blanket on his arm would leave for Texas, where he would fiercely engage in dangerous and romantic intrigue. It was said there was usually a woman in these affairs. In due season he would return to Spanishburg with several notches on his pistol-handle and an utterly commonplace account of himself. Dick Upshaw was a man of girth and stature; he smoked an ugly little black pipe, carved with the head of a heathen idol; his hands were brindled and freckled; he never lied, I think, nor failed a friend, nor ever said or did a thing to hurt the feelings of the sorriest scrub of his acquaintance.

Besides these there was little Peter Dorgan, who was much younger than the others — a rather callow lad, who worshiped Marmaduke and his stalwart friends so passionately that they took him in hand and tried to make a man of him — without any particular success.

Nearly all of the friends were in the Regiment — Marmaduke's Regiment of Confederate Cavalry, just organized at Spanishburg; Big Dick Upshaw was Lieutenant-Colonel; Lockspur was coming home to take the post of Regimental Surgeon; Peter Dorgan was a private in the rear rank. All were mustered in but Romilly.

Romilly held back.

He had shown no lack of interest in the organization of the regiment. Indeed, it was through his skilful planning and diplomacy that Marmaduke had been made Colonel. But for himself he would accept nothing. If there was any fly in Marmaduke's ointment that afternoon, it was Romilly's behavior. What *did* he mean to do? He kept thinking about it as he neared his home; once he fairly stopped his horse in the intensity of his perplexity — then he laughed. "Whatever Romilly may do will be right," he said aloud, and spurred forward.

A park of great and beautiful trees surrounded the house at Eagle Bend, and a mighty whispering of branches was going on — it was always going on there. Night and day, summer and winter, these lofty foresters were incessantly talking. When Marmaduke was away from Eagle Bend and thought of coming home, it was to think — and with unfailing pleasure — of riding up under great murmuring branches.

A white picket fence enclosed an acre or more of the park about the house, and from the stone steps a brick walk bordered with boxwood came down to the gate. Here Marmaduke dismounted. An old negro who had been sitting on the mounting block, holding a horse, rose slowly and stiffly to take Marmaduke's rein.

"Has anyone come to see me, Joram?"

"No suh. Is you lookin' for company, too, Marse Henry?"

"Yes."

"I'd better kerry dat word to de kitchen, den," said the old man.

That day Lockspur had reached Spanishburg. There he at once sought recuperation at the tavern; and calling for pen, paper, and appropriate refreshment, he despatched by special messenger the following:

MY DEAR MARMADUKE:

This is to inform you that I have at last arrived in Spanishburg, and that in company with the melancholy Romilly and the sapient Upshaw I shall seek you in your leafy solitude at Eagle Bend about supper time. We first thought to make this meeting a joyful Surprise, but we feared that, by some miscarriage of felicity, the Potable Elements of Hospitality at the Bend should be found wanting.

Verbum sapienti sat; expect us at sunset; and until then, and ever thereafter,

Believe me,
Yours to count on,
JACK LOCKSPUR.

CHAPTER II

MARSE JUBAL

JUDGE MARMADUKE came striding down the walk. He was a tall, gaunt, grizzled old man, who was always on the move, now here, now there, now in town, now surprising the languid overseer in the river-bottoms. The old man was full of business. He looked out on the world from under shaggy brows with austere and challenging eyes. He was very practical. The word had highest rank in his category of the virtues. It represented money, and money represented power. He loved to fight a shaky case before a jury; he loved the devious skirmishings of a trade in real estate; he loved to watch, from his front porch, the progress of a majestic storm driving across the country — something in the angry force of it appealed to his inexorable soul. He had an inordinate pride in his son Henry. "The boy has got teeth to his mind," he had often declared to his fellows, the learned Justices of the Bench. He was fond of reiteration, accomplishing most of his purposes by repeated and steady blows upon the same spot.

In his youth he had been poor — very poor, and unconsidered. He had resolved to be rich. Riding

in the chill dawn of winter mornings from his country home to the mean little law office in the courthouse square, or traveling the long and weary circuit, the fire of his ambition lent a savage joyousness to the struggle; the old world was his, the soil was mellowing under the frost for his use. He had a secret glory in the very squalor of his humble beginning, a reaction to its hardships, which were bitter and prolonged, and upon which he afterwards looked back with pride and even tenderness. There was nothing of the poet in his composition, but there was much of the dramatic instinct; he had a totally unconscious appreciation of the beauties of the earth, would never speak of the sunrise, but in his soul he knew its radiance on the mountains; it had for him a personal significance, the reflex of his indomitable self-confidence. Books were to him not books, but instruments; he knew his Bible better than the preacher, his Shakespeare better than the schoolmaster; both of them he crammed down the throats of judges and jurymen in default of legal precedent and statutory law.

Old, crafty, serene, and hospitable, he went his ways, lawyer, farmer, promoter of banks and railways. Though an old-line Henry Clay Whig, he helped to carry Tennessee for John Bell, the Union and the Constitution, and when the besom of Separation swept the country, he first damned the movement as uncalled-for and inexpedient, and then

— such was the stress of the day — he turned and supported it with energy. Was it the bending of the willow to the storm? No one ever knew, but there was much of the willow in Jubal Marmaduke, and his roots were deep.

His main idea in life was to be always, and without loss of dignity, on the winning side.

He was past seventy. His wife was dead. An unfriendly legislature, with an ingratitude like that of princes, had failed to return him for a third term to the Supreme Bench. He retired, not unwillingly, to his plantation, from which he emerged occasionally to go into some important lawsuit, or to attend a meeting of stockholders. Early and late he rode his horse among the fields, and smoked his pipe at evening over the items of war and politics in the newspapers.

"How are you, son?" said he, fixing the young Colonel with his bleak eyes.

"Hello!" said the son, genially.

"Is Dave Romilly going in the army?" asked the old man.

"I don't know," said Marmaduke.

"In my judgment he is not," said his father.

"Why do you think so?"

"That is my judgment, sir," said the Judge, in a way that implied that here was reason enough. "John Fortune is talking of raising a command — little, prolix, bookish John Fortune. He hasn't busi-

ness sense enough to set a goose on a hillside — he'd put the stones on the upper side. A learned man, sir, but not practical, he's not practical. How many men do you muster?"

"Six hundred," said the Colonel.

"Six hundred," said the Judge, who relished figures. "In my opinion, son, you will have a good chance to use 'em. The Yankees are not easily whipped. Has it occurred to you that they can turn out, if there's any necessity, over a million men? Easily. A million. And good men. English, Scotch, Irish, we're all the same blood. You've got kinfolks in Pennsylvania."

He filled his pipe. "If you push it now, you'll be a Brigadier-General in a short while. Nothing to hinder. — Boy, bring my horse right up here, boy." He lighted his pipe and smoked in short, vigorous puffs. "That overseer's not worth the powder and lead it would take to kill him. Bless my life, son, the corn ain't all laid by yet. — Boy, tighten that bellyband, boy!" The "boy" was little old Joram, who was at least as old as the Judge. Every male negro on the place was "boy" to Marse Jubal. "If you write to the Governor, son, I wish you would protest against so many troops leaving the state." He emitted several more rapid puffs and put his pipe down where he would find it after supper. "I'm going to have two hundred head of steers for the army. The Quartermaster's Depart-

ment is telegraphing me for mules. I've got fifty head for 'em at a fair price. A fair price. — Boy, run down and tell Big Jim I said ketch out and go git them new bull-tongues at the hardware store before it's good and dark — right away, right away. — Fifty head of mules and two hundred head of beef," he repeated, swinging into the saddle. "I'm going to take a turn around the place, but I'll be back again supper time." He turned in his saddle, as he rode away, adding casually: "I'm looking for the Fortunes to come over."

"What, really — the Fortunes?" cried Marmaduke, surprised and pleased. The Fortunes, their nearest neighbors had not set foot on Eagle Bend for many years.

"Yes, sir, they'll be here to supper," said Marse Jubal, and was gone in a gallop.

"Well, by Christopher!" exclaimed Marmaduke.

CHAPTER III

THE FOOT LOG

MR. JOHN FORTUNE was a book-loving gentleman of a contemplative mind and expensive habits, such as backing paper at the bank. Upon a time he owned a fat boundary of bottom-lands, which in the course of years, by foreclosure of mortgage, fell into the retentive hands of Jubal Marmaduke. It was made the matter of a kind of quarrel between them. The Judge's friends said that John Fortune was a spendthrift who borrowed money he could not repay. Mr. Fortune's friends said that old Jubal took advantage of a gentleman in difficulties.

That was long ago. The breach it had caused between the families had never fully healed; and their intercourse was limited to the exchange of very stiff civilities — cold, expressionless bows at church or on the turnpike. But here was secession and war, and private animosities were washed away in the flood of partisan passion; old bitternesses were forgotten in the new arrangement of factions. Judge Marmaduke had been seen discussing the situation with Mr. Fortune in the courthouse yard, and had publicly accepted from him a chew of tobacco. Miss

Carrie Lou Bell, the Judge's sister, cried out the war news to Mrs. Fortune on the porch as she drove past in the rickety vehicle she called her carriage.

And now Diana Fortune was home from Richmond, where she had spent so much of her life in school. She had lived at home so little that none of the Marmadukes had ever got much more than a glimpse of her since she was a child. There was much talk of her; she seemed to be the kind of woman people like to discuss, but so little was actually known of her in Spanishburg that accounts differed widely as to her beauty and charm. Marmaduke remembered her as a dark-eyed little girl with obstreperous masses of black hair, riding bareheaded on the turnpike.

Of the present young woman, who must be about twenty, he had but one distinct impression. Setting out for Spanishburg on a summer day afoot, and choosing the nigh-cut through the Fortune place in place of the dusty turnpike, he came upon her sitting by the foot log, against a sycamore. She had a book in her lap, and she was poring upon the tumbling waters of the creek. The light filtered down through the boughs and was reflected in dapples of sun upon the under side of the sycamore leaves and in Diana's face. She sat on her own side of the creek, by the path at the end of the foot log, where a rude seat had been made by means of a split log placed against the trunk of the sycamore. Other

trees grew about — osage-orange, whose yellow roots ran into the water, and elm and walnut, with pennyroyal along the path, and the iron-weed blooming upon the banks. It was a cool, secluded place to come to, with no noise but the call of birds, the song of the brawling water in the checkered sunlight, and from high in the sycamore the rising and falling notes of the cicada.

Diana spoke civilly, without smiling, as he raised his hat, and he noticed that she took up her book at once, so that he might not stop to talk. The sudden movement annoyed him, for he had not indicated that he meant to do anything of the sort. After crossing the creek, he passed down a ledge of rock to where, a few feet away from her, a spring welled up quietly in a rocky basin; and fashioning a cup from a large sycamore leaf he drank deep.

As he finished drinking it came to him to turn suddenly and look at her. Her book was disregarded in her lap, and she sat gazing upon him with absorbed interest. She was fairly caught, but she fluttered only for an instant; composedly her gaze moved away — not to her book, but to the plunging water. Marmaduke had time to make a note of three things: her book was *Marmion* (he knew it by heart), and she had eyes of midnight darkness, and she was beautiful — beyond all peradventure of opinion she was beautiful.

That was two years ago, but the impression was

vivid and enduring. He could always recall her to mind as she sat there in musing loveliness, with the light from the bright waters upon her cheeks.

And he was thinking now as he walked up to the porch that it would be fine to meet her there again. And then he stopped stock still. Why not?

"By Christopher, I will do that very thing!" he cried aloud, smiting his palm with his fist. No one knew why Marmaduke swore by Christopher. It was just his "word."

"What thing?" asked his cousin Lorena Bell, who sat on the porch.

"I will go down through the nigh-cut and meet Diana Fortune," said Marmaduke.

"Maybe you will meet your fate, Henry," said Lorena.

But Marmaduke was already gone, with his head in the air, and as he walked he whistled a tune: down under the oaks he marched at a swinging stride, to the lane that led to the creek.

It was a blue and golden afternoon: the shadows stretched far along the side of the hill, and the low-dropping sun, as he passed in and out of the shade, was keen upon his neck. When he came to the foot log he stopped before crossing, to watch the water below in the broken sunlight; he was about to move on when he heard a voice beyond the creek. It was Diana, singing in snatches as she came down the path. She stopped to pluck and smell the elder

flowers, and as she looked up she saw Marmaduke. She flushed and nodded brightly as his big voice boomed across the creek.

"I was just coming after you!" he cried.

"Oh, that is fine!" she answered gaily, and advanced smiling across the foot log. She had to watch her footing, for the log was shaky and narrow, and Marmaduke, standing with his hand upon the rail, waited for her at the other end. It was a fine chance to see what she was like. She wore a white dress again — a silk dress this time, with a round, low collar, and short sleeves. Her lips were very red, the upper one curving over upon the lower with a rounding flourish; her creamy pale complexion was faintly tinted. She was tall, deep-bosomed, warmly-colored like a flower.

Catching at the single hand-rail, and moving slowly (for the glittering creek below had a dizzying effect) she came safely enough to within four feet of him. Then she lifted her eyes.

Now as he stood waiting for her, Marmaduke's heart was very eager, and it was all in his eyes. Accordingly, when Diana looked into them, she was startled, and what with that and the heady flash of the waters she lost her footing. She caught wildly at the railing, missed it, gave a desperate gasp and reeled out over the stream. "Oh, help me!" she cried.

Marmaduke swung forward and caught her in the

Marmaduke's heart was very eager

crook of his arm. It was done very cleverly, but he pulled her up with such force that he lost his own balance, and with Diana fell back against the hand-rail. It was not till she opened her eyes — she had closed them from dizziness — that Marmaduke realized that he was clasping this glowing creature close to his breast, that she was holding him fast, and her breath was on his cheek.

She lay for a moment warm and palpitating in his arms, her dark eyes opening beneath his own, grave and wondering. Then he lifted her to the landing. Neither seemed able to speak at once. She was all in a tremble — a reaction to the swift, bewildering violence of a law of nature which flung them into each other's arms. But she was the first to find voice.

"Thank you for such a warm reception!"

"You see, it is such a long time since you made us a visit," he said, "I could do no less than welcome you with open arms!"

They were very gay over it all. He did not remember what they said as they climbed the hill, except her explanation that her people had driven over by the turnpike, and how she cried out at the romantic beauty of the great oaks, and with what radiant girlish grace she thanked him, as he surrendered her to the ladies, for coming to meet her.

There does not seem enough in this to make a chapter in a book. But Marmaduke across the years

could see Diana in her dark young loveliness, looking down and smiling as she came to him upon the foot log over the creek.

CHAPTER IV

THE FOUR FRIENDS

MARMADUKE went up to his room to dress for supper, feeling that something extraordinary and very beautiful had happened. He did not pause to consider what it was; he was content with the feeling of good fortune and well-being; life and the world had a touch as of velvet. Bildad, his black servant, came and shaved him; when he had bathed he put on his new Confederate uniform and surveyed himself in the glass. The mirror framed a stalwart figure in gray — a big, jovial, powerful man of twenty-five, with large aquiline features, thick curling black hair, a strong mouth half-hid by a drooping moustache and dark eyes sharply piercing. People did not often speak of Henry Marmaduke as a handsome man, but it was generally said that he was fine-looking and mighty clever. It is necessary to explain that in Tennessee, in the old days, when a man was called clever, it meant that he had a liberal spirit and great kindness of heart.

He was pleased with his looks in the glass and turned and posed for some minutes. While he was admiring himself there came through the open window the sound of a man's voice, singing:

Coming from Palestine,
Long time I roam,
Lady Love, Lady Love,
Welcome me home!

"Why, it's old Lockspur!" he cried, and ran from the room and down the stairs.

It was the same old Lockspur, with his same gleaming glasses and pointed black beard, with his hat cocked on one side.

And helter-skelter have I rode to thee,
And tidings do I bring, and lucky joys,
And golden times, and happy news of price!

Negro servants passing around the house paused to listen, while Lockspur, after an impressive delay — for he could never come out at once with a piece of news — told finally in dramatic language of how the Confederate forces under Beauregard had met the invading army under McDowell at Manassas Junction, and of how the latter had been driven in panic back upon Washington.

The momentous tidings were confirmed by Colonel Upshaw, who came later, bringing all the telegraphic advices then obtainable.

Still later another horseman arrived, looking pale and fatigued as he stepped into the circle of light that flooded the steps. It was Romilly. Marmaduke came down to meet him, and took him up to join Lockspur and Upshaw, in his room.

The windows rattled with a jar of cannon, and presently the church bells rang. Spanishburg was celebrating the victory of Bull Run.

"By ganney," said Upshaw, bathing his glowing face and great red neck, "I'm afraid the war's going to be over before we get to the front. Well, I don't care if it is. I ain't much mad, any way."

Lockspur stretched himself on the bed, with his hands clasped behind his head, his booted foot tapping the floor — his characteristic posture. His dark blue eyes gleamed behind his gleaming glasses and his nose curved when he smiled. "What do *you* get, Romilly?" he demanded.

Romilly seemed slow to answer, and Marmaduke said: "Oh, he can get what he likes — you may rely upon that. Every one thinks my father got me my commission, but the truth is, it was Romilly who worked the thing up. And don't imagine I don't appreciate it, old man. If ever you need the service of a friend, call for that service from me."

"There ought to be no talk of obligations between friends," said Romilly. "Friends simply are."

"Yes," said Marmaduke. "but sometimes a man gets in the habit of letting too much go without saying."

"You ought to be with the gang, Romilly," said Lockspur. "What do you intend to do?"

"I don't know," said Romilly. And he strolled moodily out of the room.

Marmaduke turned to Lockspur. "Your commission as Regimental Surgeon is left blank. I'll fill it out tomorrow."

"Thanks," said Lockspur. "But what gets me is, why Romilly should be so dashed indifferent about the thing. I don't understand it — by gad, I don't think I want to understand it!"

"I don't either," said Upshaw, clawing his moustache.

"Nor I," said Marmaduke.

"I expect we'd better let it go at that," said Upshaw.

"Yes," said Lockspur. "Every man's got a right to insist on doing as he dashed pleases. I know I do."

The Doctor went to the window, where he took out a cigar and gazed at it, but having learned by repeated experience — the only way he ever learned anything — that there was neither pleasure nor profit for him in a cigar on an empty stomach, replaced it in his waistcoat pocket with a sigh. It occurred to him that he was in a bad humor. In spite of the crowding glories and excitements of the hour his private lot seemed desolate. The cause of this entails a paragraph or two of history.

Lorena Bell was now twenty-two; she had a rose-clear complexion: no one ever thought of her as more than sixteen. She was fragile, graceful and fair, with hair distinctively golden, a gentle mouth

(which drooped a little at the corners, perhaps from her habit of listening with sympathetic attention) and blue eyes nobly arched with broadly penciled brows. Her forehead was white and delicately veined; she wore blue silk frocks; she was extremely fastidious in all her appointments, and dainty in her dress. It was generally agreed that she was notably pretty; her ways were ways of gentleness, and though she was given at times to extravagant gaieties, her nature was grave and her clear eyes were serious places, the homes of tender anxiety. She kept and cared for her dolls till she was a grown young woman, and nothing pleased her so much as on winter nights to sit with a bit of sewing on the floor in the Judge's great bedroom, which was used as a sitting-room, when Henry had his friends there. She heard Marse Jubal's twice-told tales with unfailing delight, and she loved to hear the young men talk. She made little *ach's!* and *psha's!* when the sewing went wrong; sometimes she crooned or sang softly, in so low a tone that no one heard or noticed, until her voice caught and broke upon some unattainable note. When Marmaduke or Lockspur discoursed she would put in her word, and sometimes very shrewdly; but when Romilly talked she was motionless and silent, looking up at him.

She developed slowly but continuously in mind and soul; she became a clever housekeeper, and the house and its appointments made a record, in some

sort, of the evolution of her taste. The things she and the others admired so in childhood, the dried grasses in vases, the lithographs and cardboard mottoes, were put upstairs, giving place to oil paintings, pastels, wax flowers under glass, and the kind of furniture that goes with these.

In time she realized that the paintings were daubs and the crayons hideous, and the wax flowers under bell jars, though much admired by country cousins, gave offense to a growing sense of the truly aesthetic. So up they went to the second floor, the furniture with them, driving their predecessors still farther before them, into the garret, where they now reposed in merited obscurity. It was Lockspur who discovered that the three stories of the old house represented in a material way three eras in Lorena's growth: the garret was the cardboard and lithograph and dried grass era; the second floor was the "pastel" and wax flowers era; while in the great rooms below (except the Judge's) there was a stately mid-Victorian grandeur — tall mirrors in gilt frames, walnut furniture with cold marble tops, horse-hair sofas and chairs, heavy gilt cornices and imposing draperies.

Lockspur made many other discoveries at Eagle Bend, but one of his earliest was that Lorena was adorable.

He made love to her when she was sixteen, with apparent success. Six months afterwards, to use

the phrase of his own thoughts, she quite faded from his heart, for no reason at all.

At a later period the grand passion returned; he haunted her; he wrote her endless love letters. But this did not last. Love came and went, bearing a suggestive relation to the change of seasons. The periods of devotion grew briefer, the lapses longer. He would suddenly discover that her explanations about how her new dress was to be trimmed were quite uninteresting — this was a standard test — or that, in her account of her recent misunderstanding with some friend, her "I said" and "she said" seemed interminable and boresome. This was his most conclusive test!

Now Lockspur had come home to Tennessee, less for the purpose of serving his country than because of a belief in the return of the grand passion. It had sustained his spirits through the long ride; it had warmed his heart up to the very time he rode up under the whispering oaks. But when he neared the house he was dismayed to find his faith unfounded. He was like a man who seeks a friend to bring a noble gift, and, upon finding him, discovers that he has lost it. For the red brick house itself, the great picture of the Forest of Fontainebleau and the deer's head over the mantel, the comfortable horse-hair sofas so memoriferous of somnolent summer afternoons, and all the familiar sights and sounds and pleasant smells, had lost the

subtle and sweet significance and the personal charm they once possessed because of *her*. The glory was departed. Love was dead, quite dead. He could not understand why this was so. He felt cheated and mishandled.

Worst of all, he had seen her meet and greet David Romilly with a certain shy and smiling wordlessness which was perhaps more intelligible to him than to Romilly. And yet he was not jealous — even that was denied him!

"Well, Lockspur, tell us the news about the Sex," said Upshaw.

"Personally," said Lockspur, "I am done with them. What is love? A mawkish emotionalism. Let us talk of war, and the deeds of men!"

"Better still," said Marmaduke, "let us go and eat."

CHAPTER V

DAVID ROMILLY

AT SUPPER Romilly came a little late, and partook of the meal in a preoccupied way, filled with cankering inquietude. Diana sat opposite to him, and her eyes stole back and forth from him to Marmaduke, who sat next to her. She had heard from Lorena of the devoted friendship between these men, and she had a curiosity so deep as to be almost a fault, and so thoughtful as to be almost a virtue. Romilly could not be over twenty-six, she fancied; he wore a wine-colored frock suit; he was very tall and pale, his eyes were large and contemplative; his features were pale and sensitive — too sensitive, she felt, for a background of criminal courts and politics: it was the face of a poet.

But his manner and speech were the extreme of indifference. His eyes encountered hers more than once; they played upon her with all the deliberation of a stare, just as they did on the bowl of roses; he was not thinking of her at all. Romilly lived in a world of his own; he courted obscurity; he was withdrawn and studious, a rambler with his pipe; and though considerate and kindly, he had a

diffidence that went for indifference, and a dignity that passed for pride.

Abstemiousness was ingrained in him. If there was anything about him of which the affectionate Marmaduke was really critical, it was his friend's inveterate elegance. Marmaduke himself was anything but a coarse man, but he was robust and jocund, he had the physical underpinning of a strong man. As he sat beside Diana, eating and drinking, upright, sanguine, laughing and talking, powerful of build and presence, he was in marked contrast to the pale and slender young advocate, who, with one hand toying with his glass, the other hooked over the back of his chair, lounged languid and moody, his eyes full of trouble. Diana persisted in liking his face, despite the almost morose lines about his mouth; it promised a kindling brilliancy when the man was stirred.

Lockspur she knew already; she thought him conceited and impudent. Big, brindled Dick Upshaw she conceived to be dull and prosaic; he chanced to have little to say and said it. Marse Jubal, too, was silent, scooping up his supper with his knife, and pausing to call out to the cook, "Cicely, hain't we going to git any corn bread tonight?" and again, to old Joram, who waited at table, "Boy, set the things down so we can *gig* 'em," by which he had reference to a convenient method of impaling the various viands with his fork.

But when he was through with his meal he began to talk of the battle of Bull Run with such power of speech and vigor of reason that Diana (who had wondered at the kind of English this quondam Supreme Judge used sometimes) listened in deep surprise. It would make dry and dusty reading now, but then it was thrilling and momentous talk. As old Jubal bowled his reiterated opinions down the table like cannon balls, it made everything else that had been said on the subject seem beside the mark. He paused at the end, with eyes askant, palms thrust out, genially watching the effect. "A glorious victory, but not," he added, "not decisive. Not decisive."

"It was due," said Mr. Fortune, "to the direct interposition of the Providence of God, sir!"

Marse Jubal met this theory with some indifference. No one ever heard him speak of God's providence, either for or against. He sometimes went to church, where he would sit immutable, his long legs crossed, hands locked behind his head, his grizzled beard pointed at the pulpit. Whether he went there as a matter of policy, duty, or desire, no one ever knew. The matter lay between him and his Maker, locked up behind his penetrating, impenetrable eyes.

He thrust back his chair. "I tell you," he said, "it was a glorious victory. But not decisive. Not decisive." Whereupon he sailed off for his pipe.

Through the open windows came the loud screech

of katydids, and moths fluttered in from the vast darkness.

"Now the Judge has gone," said Mis' Carrie Lou, "we'll have some wine." Mis' Carrie Lou was Lorena's mother; she had lived at Eagle Bend for many years. She was a genial, stout, and saffron-tinted dame with a keen glimmer of wrinkles at the tail of her fine black eyes. She had no roses on her parchment cheeks, except on Sundays. She rarely lost an opportunity of saying she married the only aristocrat in Spanishburg, the unlamented Mr. Ashwood Bell never having done a day's work in his life, so far as anyone knew.

The home-made grape wine was served, and Mr. Fortune rose with his glass. "Young gentlemen, to the State of Tennessee, God bless her!"

The young gentlemen of Tennessee were not used to drinking toasts and they got to their feet rather awkwardly.

"God bless her!" cried Lockspur. "And the devil take all who go back on her!"

Romilly found himself, when supper was over, and the company distributed over house and porch and lawn, seated on a rustic bench in the garden with Diana Fortune. The moon had risen at the end of the valley and stood high above the white mists. Upshaw was strumming a guitar on the porch, and the shaking scrape of the nocturnal insects measured time like a clock.

Near the garden bench ran a dense border of old-fashioned roses, rich with bloom, and on the other side came Lorena Bell, strolling with Peter Dorgan, who was hopelessly in love with her.

"Did you ever read that poem about the roses, Miss Lorena, called *To Helen?*" he was asking.

"No. Say it to me," she commanded.

"It speaks about the moonlight that fell

Upon the upturned faces of a thousand
Roses that grew in an enchanted garden

. . .

Fell on the upturned faces of these roses
That smiled and died . . . enchanted
By thee and the poetry of thy presence.

"Go on," said Lorena.

The pearly lustre of the moon went out:
The mossy banks and the meandering paths,
The happy flowers and the repining trees,
Were seen no more: the very roses' odors
Died in the arms of the adoring airs.

. . .

Only thine eyes remained.
They *would not* go — they never yet have gone.

"It's from Poe, you know," said Peter.

"It is beautiful," said Lorena.

"It always makes me think of you," said Peter.

"I think," said Lorena, "that if you were a man, I'd let you fall in love with me."

"I am already in love with you," said Peter. "And if I am not a man, what am I?"

"I don't know," said Lorena. "Some folks say

— well, you cry, you know. A man oughtn't to cry."

She did not care for Peter, but she permitted him to make love to her, circumspectly, to his heart's content, for the good of his constitution. She was deeply versed in the lore of love, and she considered that, since he must love hopelessly, it was well he should love someone who would treat him kindly. No girl could really love him; he was tow-haired, and had watery-blue eyes, and his uniform was too big for him, and nearly everybody laughed at him everywhere, and treated him with contempt — this, too, perhaps, for the good of his constitution.

"I am only seventeen," said Peter. "Maybe I'll outgrow it."

They passed beyond earshot.

"Do you know," Diana was saying to Romilly, "I can't help being curious to know why you are here at all."

"In this world? I could never find out," said he, "but I feel that there is a reason — there must be."

"In Tennessee, I mean, or rather in this poor little Spanishburg," she said, after pausing to wonder at the earnestness of the seemingly light reply. "In this very small *corner* of the world," she added.

"Are the other corners, then, so fine and big?" he asked.

"I think you know what they are like. The point is, they are not corners at all."

He had a moment of reflection, as upon something to which he turned his mind with an effort; then, "Oh, the larger opportunity, the fertile atmosphere," he broke out. "The great devices to keep the mind from rusting, the theater, music, culture, brilliant society, expansion, variety, big doings — and people — people upon people! Is that just what you mean?

> Something to see, by Bacchus!
> Something to hear, at least!"

Diana smiled at the unexpected animation she had aroused. "You expressed my idea when you said, 'the larger opportunity.'"

"Well, that isn't," he declared, "all the metropolitan life means to me. It means a state of existence where the struggle for life, and for an expensive respectability, which seems just as indispensable, is the one idea I meet in every house. It is reflected from the faces in the street, it stares at me from every dead wall, it subordinates all other motives, and rises like a sort of miasma over humanity — humanity in the mass, which is a depressing thing."

"I seem to have heard some such view expressed before," she said. "It did not strike me as particularly courageous. Really, don't you find the same thing here?"

"Oh, to a degree, yes — how else should I make

my living? But the air is clearer for the few poisonous exhalations; people have more leisure and latitude to be human — oh, the whole thing doesn't wear such a haggard face — for me, I say. I don't attempt to speak of the thing as it really is. This is but a private illusion, but it is our loyalty to our abiding illusions which spells the truth about reality. Had I a different sort of fiber and a greater vitality, I don't doubt my illusion would be different. There is Marmaduke — he has the strength of his sympathies, he has stomach, he has religion; that man would adorn and flourish in the metropolitan life."

"Ah, you have a true friend in Mr. Marmaduke," said the girl.

"Yes," he said.

"But you have lived very happily here," she reverted.

"Up to the limit of my capacities, yes. What do I care for the larger opportunities? I would not take over the dominion of the earth in exchange for one true friend! I have — I have had — all the rewards of life to which I am entitled."

"And what are they?"

"My friends, my books, and a practicable vocation."

"You like your profession," she stated.

"Not altogether."

"I had not thought of you as liking things only half-way."

"Thank you for thinking of me at all," he said. "But it is not what one would most like to do, but what one can do, that one must do."

She started — she had never heard it stated in those words. "Oh, that is so true," she cried. "I don't know what has inspired me to be so inquisitive, Mr. Romilly, but it seems to me I have known you before, somehow. Will you come, sometimes, and exploit for me this Boeotia, and the certitudes you find?"

"Oh, there are no certitudes left now," Romilly said, "and we are not at all Boeotian; the people of these hills step out mighty lively, I notice, at the call of war."

"It must be fine to go out and fight," she lingered to say. "It is one of the few masculine prerogatives I really envy."

"Yes, when one knows what to fight for."

"Well, for me," she said, "cause is nothing beside the exhilarating fact of war itself."

"Exhilarating!" he cried. "To see them making ducks and drakes of a costly heritage!"

"What heritage?"

"The Federal Republic."

She looked at him in surprise. "Surely," she said presently, "with such views, you can have no doubt —"

"About what to fight for?"

"Yes."

"Ah, but whom should I be fighting?"

She did not answer, and he said: "My own people." He stood up, looking very tall. "You will see," he said, "why I must ask you to excuse me for my failure to be exhilarated."

"I will pardon you anything," she said, "except failure to come to see me."

Lorena was calling, and she slipped away.

He looked after her as she moved in the moonlight. She seemed a rare and thinking woman, and she had — it lingered reminiscently — a pleasing voice; moreover, she was fair — she was very fair. He let his mind dwell for a little space upon her, as a man walking in grief and pain is half diverted for a time by some golden vista, or the summer sunlight through green leaves.

Then face and form and voice faded from his thought. Alone and unhappy he sat staring at the dreaded necessity of deciding what to do.

The oaks lifted darkly their foliage against a filmy sky. From under the mists that trailed upon the ridges floated up to Romilly the murmur of the river shoals. Tobacco-moths and humming birds whirred amongst the honeysuckle. Beetles blundered now and then against the house, whose bricks were yet warm with the heat of the departed day. The night was pervaded with a strange unrest, and fear and mystery were abroad in the leagues of moonlight.

He turned over in his mind the whole unfortunate business, about which so many tongues were wagging north and south. In the end he could find no means of making a reconciliation between his duty and his inclination. His inclination was to stay with his friends; his duty, he felt, was something far different.

Marmaduke came out to him and sat down on the bench, where Romilly made room for him without speaking. They sat together for some time before the silence was broken. When Marmaduke spoke his voice was gentle. "Romilly, you are very much depressed."

"That is true, Henry," said his friend. "That is very true."

"Well, I know it's no use, my saying anything," said the Colonel. He dropped his hand lightly on Romilly's shoulder. "Remember, though, that we are always friends."

With this he got up and made off. There was in his mind some prescience of what it was in Romilly's to do, and his friend, realizing this, looked after him with gratitude and remorse. To the sensitive soul there is no keener tragedy than this — to find the performance of what appears as a plain duty inseparably linked with the semblance of disloyalty. Here were hostile armies entering his own state, upon a devastating expedition against his own home, with all the machinery of war directed against his

own friends, and he was — for a mere idea — intent upon joining them!

He could not understand the perfervid indignation of the South. He could see no reason in the raging appeal to arms. Himself incapable of suasion by oratory, he beheld as in a dream the generous white-hot passion of the Southern people, and perceived in helpless dismay the significance of what they would attempt to do.

In the Republic of American States he saw more than a mere political government. He saw in it, with a student's enthusiasm, that which had been the despair of old-world economists, the great idea of a moral democracy, first among the powers of the world. He knew that it was not perfect, but it was conceived in wisdom and born of courage, and upon its solidarity hung the whole weight of its meaning to mankind. These views he shared with a few redoubtable men of his own community, in particular with a certain valiant Fighting Parson, who put his back to the wall, and undismayed by the advancing wave of panic and hysteria, stood stoutly for the Union. This man was a true leader; his weapons were a quill pen, printer's ink, and a mastery of bitter invective, without which, in that day of clamoring tongues, his words would have been lost. Thus he sent the cry of loyalty traveling like a fiery cross in the mountains, and in the hearts of thousands kept alive the old faith of Tennessee.

Romilly was the least belligerent of the loyalists. Parson Brownlow, like a sworded Puritan, took a splendid joy in the contest, but poor Romilly saw in it nothing but ruin and heartache and his attitude was in some sort but a choice between two evils. His family, his friends, his intimate acquaintance — all were hotly Confederate, and no man in his circle, unless it might be Marmaduke, could set a higher value upon friendship. He had kept apart from the Union conclaves; in that lonely hour he had no human voice to comfort or counsel him. He had no passion, for you cannot call by the name of passion a habit of anxiously seeking to do what is right. But something he must do, and do it now, and when he tried to decide that he must abandon the Union cause to its fate and float with the tide, he found he could not do it. What was this Union, this cold, remote, impersonal thing that called to him in the night? What was this Union, in whose defense that homely, kindly man in Washington had summoned a hundred thousand bayonets?

What was this Union? So a man might ask, What is the flag? and never know until in foreign waters he saw the significant old silk rag serenely speaking the navies of the world, and found the answer in his heart.

Romilly rose suddenly and breathed deep. "By God, I will go!" he said, aloud, and hurried away to the house.

In the end of the porch Marmaduke, Lockspur and Upshaw were deep in counsel. He could see Lockspur's glasses gleaming in the light from his cigar. They, too, were rehearsing the old theme — they had to go over it all with Lockspur.

"The South had but one hope while she was in the Union," Marmaduke was saying to Lockspur — how often had he said it to others! "This was, that the Constitution would protect her rights."

"The Constitution was the apple of her eye," said Upshaw.

"And it was abrogated," said Marmaduke.

"Abrogated? By ganney, it was smashed!" growled Upshaw.

"And so," continued Marmaduke, "there was no course left for the South but to shake herself free of such perfidious political associates forever — "

Romilly slipped upstairs, unseen. In Marmaduke's room he sat down and wrote a letter, a brief note of affectionate farewell. It was a hard task, but he completed it with despatch, and, addressing it to Marmaduke, Lockspur and Upshaw, sealed it, and left it lying on the table.

This done, he lighted a fresh cigar and glanced about the room with a sigh. Good little old room! What talks they had had together there — what laughter and good times — he and Marmaduke, and Lockspur, and Upshaw! He remembered the time of his first visit to Eagle Bend with Marmaduke,

upon a cold December night, and how bright and joyous the old house seemed, with Lorena's laughter — she was but a child then — ringing through the wide halls, and how Marmaduke had taken him up to his room to show him his books and his guns, and how ceaselessly they had chattered, and how they had been amazed that they should have the same ideas and tastes in common — so different from those of other boys! How well he remembered that night, with the hissing of the wind in the oaks outside, and the bird-dog rapping his tail on the hearth, his shadow stretching along the shining floor under the bed, and how the black face of the night was pressed against the windowpane, and how that solemn flutist, the winter wind, sat upon the chimney top, and blew! . . .

Ah, it was hard! *They* were beautifully in earnest, fired with patriotism, flushed with enthusiasm, their slogan was independence — a compelling word. He felt none of these things, and he knew that if he went with them, in what squalor would perish his self-respect — his indispensable self-respect!

His conduct appeared to him in no heroic colors. He was not the first man who has set his course by the compass duty, and looked away homesick, with haggard longing, from the dreary wastes to which it pointed. But he was screwed to the sticking point, and it was nothing new to him to find doggedness wear limpingly the shoes made for eagerness.

They could be made to serve, however, and he had proved it, the record being written in fine lines of iron about his young mouth.

He clapped on his hat and went downstairs, where he found them inclined to protest at his going so soon.

"I have something to do," he said smiling. "Good-night, Lockspur; 'night, Upshaw."

"Good-night, Romilly," said Lockspur. "I'm afraid you've got something on your mind. Do you know," he continued, turning to the others, "that Romilly made a *mésalliance* in his early youth? That is his secret. He married his conscience, and he is frightfully henpecked!"

"Good-night, Davie," said Upshaw, without even smiling at Lockspur's sally.

Marmaduke followed him down the steps, anxiously. "Remember what I said, Romilly. No matter what you do, we are friends. No damned circumstance can ever make me forget that!"

"Yes," said Romilly, wringing his hand. "Good-night."

"Good-night, old fellow."

He walked down the drive to where his horse stood at the hitching-post. There was a flurry of skirts, and Lorena appeared. She had been sitting with Diana, and had heard Romilly say good-night.

To her, Romilly was a knight of romance — grave, gentle and considerate. Sometimes she went

riding with him; sometimes he read to her; his casual opinions were her canon law; secretly, timorously, though she would never admit it, even to herself, she adored him with a passionate girlish fidelity. She listened in the evening for his coming; when he was on the place and not near her she was unhappy, and yet, with Daphnean instinct she often avoided him; her life was a kingdom of romantic dreams, and he was its prince. It was an open secret in the household that she worshiped Romilly — to all but Romilly himself.

He had never thought of her as a sweetheart. He had never made love to her. It had never struck him that she might be in love with him; such things did not readily occur to him. But as she ran out from among the roses, wide-eyed and dewy, it came to him that she had been a loyal friend, and he knew that he should miss her.

They walked together to where his horse stood whinnying in the moonlight.

"Is there anything wrong?" she asked.

"No," said he. "I must tell you good-by, my dear."

"But I know there is!" she protested. "Why do you say good-by? I had such a dream the other night about — about you — I dreamed you had been killed in battle. And I heard Uncle Jubal say you were for the Union. Is it true? Is it true? For it's all the same to me — whatever you

do. You — you have always been so good, so good to me!"

His throat tightened strangely. "I don't know just what I am going to do, Lorena," he said, "only this — I am going away. I haven't told the others," he went on, speaking quickly, "I hadn't the heart to, I wanted our last words to be friendly and kind. They will know tomorrow, for I have written them." He bent suddenly and kissed her cheek; it was wet. "Good-by, little Lorena," he said, and mounted swiftly and rode away.

A bird was singing in the boughs above. He was singing his own original song, his artistic presentation of life as he understood it, remembering the tinkle of woodland streams, the lisp of morning winds, and the conversation of lovers. All the dewy sweetness of the July night was uttered in the stream of melody that gurgled from the little master's throat, all its mystery and dreaming glory.

But Lorena could not hear the mocking-bird. She sat upon the horse block, a crumpled heap, listening for the last hoof beat of Romilly's horse, as he galloped away in the moonlight.

CHAPTER VI

MARMADUKE GOES TO WAR

DIANA waked at the earliest light. A cavalry horse slacked speed on the pike and the horseman blew at her gate such a ranting tune upon his cornet that she did not care to lie abed any longer. She rose, dressed and went out into the cool gray morning.

The day broke infinitely sweet and calm, with a purple presage of mounting heat and a shining summer day. Cocks were crowing. The sun had not appeared. There was, as yet, no ringing of whetstones in the drenched meadows, no jingle of trace chains, no singing of black ploughmen riding afield. The cool white turnpike, washed clean by a hard rain over night, had so far given passage to none but the fleeting trumpeter who had broken Diana's sleep.

She wandered among the flowers and picked a red rose to put in her hair, pleased with the fortunes of the moment. It was the hour beloved of the early riser, who feels, as no late sleeper can, the amplitude of the day. From the tangled briers in the pasture came the song of the cicada; in the chestnut tops the redbirds were calling; a breath came from the river,

freighted with brier rose and elderbloom. Now, far down the turnpike, a wagon drew slowly on, with a crying of unoiled axles. This was the season when the farmers brought melons to sell at the Spanishburg market. The thought of cantaloupe for her father's breakfast sent her flying to the kitchen for a basket, and swinging this at arm's length she set off across the lawn, running lightly, as though her feet but touched the grass. As she went the sun came up through the woods, ran white along the fences and flowed over the world, flinging shadows far across the dewy fields. Diana, turning to look about her at the sudden glory, caught sight of her father coming out on the porch to smoke an early pipe. It was always to her a triumph to be up before him, and she set her basket down, put her hands to her mouth and crowed at him like chanticleer. The imitation was so perfect and piercing that she was answered from the barnyard. Mr. Fortune shook his pipe at her and sat down to his morning meditation.

Along the turnpike came a vender of melons, Joe Dockery by name, a man of many devices. He was by turns woodsman, gardener, fisherman, and philosopher, but by the irony of fate these noble pursuits were to him but the means of his livelihood; his true vocation was that of a sufferer, born to endure the perpetual pangs of nervous dyspepsia. In this affliction he sought for the sympathy of his

fellow creatures, and the constant failure of his efforts to make them understand the poignancy of his sufferings had brought into his inquisitive blue eyes an expression of hopelessness. He looked upon life with that despair with which a marooner might look seaward from his desert island, forever seeing the ships go by, oblivious of his signals. He was a lean little man, with a big yellow moustache, and his flea-bitten gray horse was lean and little, and had a look of troubled curiosity, strangely like his master. The gear encumbering this animal was an affair of straps, strings, and bits of wire, and the wobbling wheels of the wagon had been a marvel for many years. An ambulant invalid, sentenced by his physician to a sober pace and a tranquil existence, might have found a moral in Joe Dockery's ancient equipage, and warmed his heart with thinking of the prodigious total of service performed by that miracle of decrepitude, as it tottered insecurely but serenely through the years.

"Milons?" said Joe. "Whoa, Dick! Yes'm, I've got some of the finest mush-milons ye ever set your teeth in. Them leastest ones is three for a dime, these Emerald Jims is a half-a-dime apiece. Them's the kind your pappy likes; I've sold him a heap o' milons in my day. Hand me your basket — thar's six, picked this mornin', with the jew on 'em. Thank ye. They tell me the so'jers is ordered to march this mornin'."

He might have told me! was Diana's thought. Something came over her that took away her pleasure in the day. "Who told you, Joe?" she asked.

"A so'jer passed the word awhile ago," said Joe.

This was the second morning after Diana's visit to Eagle Bend, when Marmaduke had brought her home. Since then she had not seen him, but she had thought of him a great deal, partly because he seemed to her much more interesting than any other man she had met in that dull little community, but chiefly because of his eager, pointed interest in her. It is primarily the way of women, I think, to be less concerned with admiring than with admiration, and Marmaduke's appreciation was something he had made no effort either to express or conceal; it was simply and engagingly apparent. And now he was going without a word to her!

"Yes'm, they're going to clear out right away," said Joe. "'T would pleasure me some to foller Henry Marmaduke. I've knowed Henry ever sence he was a little feller runnin' around in his shirt-tail — swaddlin' clothes, ye understand — jist trundle-bed trash," he hastily explained, overcome by a delicate scruple as to the propriety of his language. "Yes'm, I'd love to go, but I can't; I'm gifted with the dyspepsy."

"That must be quite a gift," said Diana.

"Yes'm, 'tis," said Joe, encouraged by her kindly tone. "I'm bothered a sight with stomach trouble.

I seen Dr. Lockspur yisterday; I've got a disorderly liver, and I axed him if he didn't think my ducks was all stopped up, but he never give me no satisfaction. All he says was, 'Try to fergit it!' jist that-a-way! I git mighty low sometimes; my circulation gits clogged, and my heart goes *thong!—thong!* and I have that *snaky* feelin'; it looks like nothin' I ever take ever —"

"Do you suppose the troops will come this way, Joe?"

"It looks like nothin' I ever take ever does me any good," Joe continued. "And I suffer with sich a pain around my heart. But I hardly ever name it to anybody. I never git no sympathy. What was it you axed me?"

"You do have dreadful times, Joe, I know," said Diana, contritely. "I was asking if you thought the soldiers will march this way."

"Why, I wouldn't be surprised if they didn't," said Joe, meaning of course, if they did. "I expect I'd better make haste. Git up thar, Dick! I hope your pappy will like them milons."

Diana carried her basket of Emerald Gems halfway to the house, and sat down on a circular seat built around the trunk of a great chestnut. It was still very early; horsemen cantered up and down the pike; wagons rumbled over the bridge at the creek; far and near chimneys were giving up blue wood smoke.

Then, almost suddenly, the morning broke into tumult and music. A small detail of horsemen trotted forward, and upon their heels, with a flutter of flags and guidons, with shouts and singing and the trumpets playing, the main body of Marmaduke's Cavalry poured out of Spanishburg and clamored down the turnpike.

They were raw troops, and new to the military drill, but there was not one among them who was new to the saddle. All were competent horsemen, and at the sight of so many stalwart mounted men, riding in solid gray squadrons, Diana's heart leaped wildly with pleasure and exultation. As troop after troop went by, Diana could recognize some of the officers and men. She saw Peter Dorgan, who seemed particularly unhappy; she saw Lieutenant-Colonel Upshaw, his great face and neck rather red in the sun; she saw Jack Lockspur, who saluted her with his sword. Coming as though from nowhere a crowd of people lined the roadway; servants ran from the house, and even Mr. Fortune could not withstand the rush to see the soldiers go: bareheaded, and smoking furiously, he hurried past Diana without seeing her. Boys and negroes ran by the soldiers, the crowd kept calling good-bys and applauding favorites, and at last, toward the end, Diana heard the name of Marmaduke, and cries of "Marse Henry!" and a sound of cheering. Soon she saw him. He was dressed for the first time in

the full panoply of his rank, and mounted on a powerful black horse. The animal was too newly bitted to be unmindful of the tumult and the blaring trumpets, but Marmaduke sat at ease in the saddle, compelling the creature to his will. He was bareheaded, his thick hair curled about his ears in what — among those who could follow it — was the prevailing custom; now and then he waved his hat at the bystanders, now and then his horse reared, pawing and restive. He looked every inch the commanding officer, and Diana sprang up and clapped her hands.

Then, dismayed, she caught her breath, sat down again and clasped her knee. He did not look once in her direction, nor seem in the least aware of her. And presently he was gone. The rear guard and the wagons rumbled by; the crowd began to melt; the sound of rolling hoofs and the music of the bugles were subdued by the distance.

They were gone, and Diana struggled with a strange conflict of feelings. It was true that she never had much to do with the people of Spanishburg at any time, and that she was but recently returned to Tennessee, after a long absence; but these reflections did little to soften her mortification that of all that company not one had cared to come to say good-by. She sat holding her knee, biting her lip; she was very near to tears.

The distant bugles made a sudden change of note.

The noise of the horsemen became faint, and almost ceased. The column had halted.

Diana's heart beat quickly; and as though to keep time with it there drew back along the highway a swiftly galloping horse. She would not look as the hoofbeats grew louder, she would not look as the horseman entered the gate, she did not lift her eyes, though she was breathing fast, till Henry Marmaduke drew rein in front of her and dismounted at her feet.

"What glorious luck!" he cried. "I was terribly afraid that after all I wouldn't get to see you!"

"But why such haste?"

"Orders! Orders at midnight to march today at sunrise."

"You might have sent me word!"

"I did."

"I didn't get it. It was a mere accident that got me up so early. One of your trumpeters played such a fanfare on the road that I couldn't sleep."

"If you should ask me," said Marmaduke, "I believe I could tell you the tune he played," and standing up very straight, and beating time with a long brown forefinger, he whistled a stave of a popular air; he was in high feather. "And I could tell you the name of the man that played that tune; his name is Billy Webster."

"And if you should ask me, I believe I could

guess, now, the name of the man that sent that man to play that tune, so early in the morning!" said Diana, flushing brightly. "But what is it called?"

"It's a war song," he assured her, gravely. "Ask somebody next time you hear it."

"I will," she smiled. "Won't you sit down? Haven't you time to make me a little visit?"

He drew his arm through the bridlerein and seated himself. "I told Upshaw to hold the column fifteen minutes."

"Have you bidden all your other friends good-by?" she asked.

"My other friends — but I thank you for that phrase! — my other friends are going with me. Lorena and the Judge expect to ride a little way with us."

"Is Mr. Romilly going?"

"I have been trying not to think of Romilly," he said, in a constrained way. "Did you not know that he was gone?"

"Gone?"

"He left night before last, to join the Union Army."

"I hadn't heard it," said Diana, "but I am not at all surprised. He talked to me."

"Did he?" Marmaduke's quick look appealed for some show of opinion.

"I liked Mr. Romilly," said Diana. "I think that what he has done is heroic."

"Do you truly think so? It isn't what the others are saying."

"It's no matter. Feeling as he did — " she paused.

"That is just it," he said. "You seem to understand him better than most of those who were intimate with him. Lockspur, perhaps, is disposed to do him some justice, and old Dick Upshaw, though he doesn't understand in the least, good downright soul, is always willing to think the best of every man. But for the rest — " He shook his head. "I'm glad, after all, that he went away in the manner he did — we had no words. I am afraid, had we thrashed the matter out together, we should have said things to be sorry for. His own brother cursed his name in the street today. But he was more to me than a brother. The affection of brothers is often a mere habit. Romilly and I," he added, as though explaining everything in a phrase, "we were friends."

"I know," she said. She had felt herself on guard with Marmaduke; she lived in a time when young ladies were taught, if they were taught anything at all, to be always on guard, and Diana had been taught a great deal. But the gentle magnanimity with which he supported Romilly's defection was to her a letter of unlimited credit. "I know," she repeated, and her dark eyes dwelled upon him with great kindness.

He changed the subject and began to talk of her, saying that he hoped they might see much of each other after his return, which would be very soon, for if there was one thing of which both North and South were sure, it was that the war would not last long.

He spoke with a simplicity which Diana mistook for mere boyishness. She was wise and experienced — for one of her age — but not yet so much so as to be able to perceive that this very simplicity was a characteristic of the man, and always would be; she felt he had much to learn, and so he had, but not the things she supposed.

She was taking him in, in her intent considering way, and had ceased to think of poor Romilly, even while his name was in her ears; she was absorbed in the person before her, the young man himself, noting how shapely his strong, brown hands were, how clear was the ruddy hue of his face, how big and powerful was the young figure that set at nothing the most imperfect fit of the uniform — he struck her all at once as formidable. She had seen the soldiers riding day after day, she had seen them walking with their sweethearts, and she had permitted herself a touch of envy: how unjust that she should be in such a stirring world, and yet not of it! But now they all waited in the highway while he, the captain of them all, lingered to say good-by to her! She was pleased that it should come about so:

she would not have known him an hour sooner; she cherished their strangeness to each other.

From far down the road, where the cavalry rested in place, there came the command of a trumpet, and the rumbling indicated that the horsemen were moving on.

"I must go," he said, abruptly. He had not come to tell her that he loved her; he did not know, at that time, that this was true. He knew only that she was beautiful — conspicuously beautiful. In the short time that had passed since he first spoke with her, he had been fiercely engaged with duties and preoccupations and made to suffer the tragic loss, if not of his dearest friendship, at least of his dearest friend. He was not aware of how often he had thought of her, nor how her face and voice had haunted him. Now he must tell her good-by. He caught his breath in wonder at the sudden mutiny of his desires.

"Oh, I don't want to go!" he cried out. "Two days ago I was as keen to go as a hunter for the field, but now I want to stay and get acquainted with you! I have been cheated of a great deal, all these years; I've had you for a neighbor and never knew you," he went on, plunging into reckless, rapid speech, as was his way when embarrassed. "We might have had a friendship all this time, Diana. We might have taken long rides together, and talked of books and poetry — of Waverly and Marmion —

wasn't it Marmion I saw you reading, down by the creek? We might have had a friendship — a fine friendship, don't you think?"

"I do, indeed," she said earnestly.

"And then when I came to ride away to war we might have become such friends that you would ask me to be sure and write to you — "

"Oh, will you?" she cried.

"And find me a flower to wear, perhaps," he went on.

Her hand followed the direction of his eyes, straying to the rose in her hair; she smiled.

"And pin it on my coat," he said.

"And pin it on your coat," she said, not looking higher than his lapel.

"And say," he said; but his heart plunged wildly. He could carry the spirit of the impromptu no further. Standing close, her fingers touching his breast, his soul and sense were taken with her loveliness, and he could not speak. When she looked up, the rosebud fixed in place at last, his eyes beat down her lashes, and for a moment she, too, was without the power of words. But she rallied swiftly.

"And say," she said tensely, "God bless you, Henry Marmaduke, and bring you home safe from the war!"

He pressed her hand, bowed, and in an instant was in the saddle. She stood there watching him as he rode at a canter under the trees down to the

highway. His curling dark hair flowed from under his slouch hat, which was looped up with a feather and a star. The sunlight, falling in splinters between the boughs, glittered from his side arms and from the smooth coat of his horse. As he gained the turnpike he paused to say adieu to Mr. Fortune, who had lingered at the gate to talk with a neighbor; and looking back, waved his plumed hat to her. She waved her hand in return, and when he was gone she drew her breath deeply, and sighed.

She watched the cavalry winding over the hills, till the last troop, and the clatter and laughter and trumpeting, were lost in the distance and dust. Long after she had heard, as she thought, the last sound of them, there would come faintly once more the call of a bugle in the morning hills. Long after all possibility of hearing it was past she heard it again; and through the slow-wheeling hours of the afternoon she heard, or seemed to hear, again that faint music, as of something old and familiar, and yet new and strange.

That evening a boy went down the road, whistling the air that waked her in the morning. "Daddy," cried Diana, "what is that tune?"

The old man listened.

"Humph! It's a pretty old-fashioned tune, Di," he said. "Your musical education has been too severely classical, I am afraid. That's 'The Girl I Left Behind Me.'"

CHAPTER VII

THE SEPTEMBER RAID

MARMADUKE flung himself into the campaign with a kind of madness. Ambition stung him; all at once the easy-going provincial lawyer found himself alive to the need of immediate achievement. He found that big things could be done with partisan cavalry and he discovered — to his great joy — that he was the man to do them. While his troopers slept he toiled late over plans and distances and maps. When he went into a fight he assaulted with a devilish vehemence, striking suddenly. He hung on the heels of the enemy's infantry like a terrier, and when they turned ponderously to crush him he was somewhere else. These things made for him quickly a reputation. "Marmaduke the Raider," was a name that carried terror in the hills. The fighting strength of his organization was grossly exaggerated and the name became a military asset; on more than one occasion it ran before him like a blighting wind, smoothing the path for victory. To be known as one of Marmaduke's men gave to the individual trooper a distinction and a glamour; many young men were for this reason attracted to his standard, and though for the sin of youthfulness, he

retained the rank of colonel, he soon found himself in command of a brigade. It is to be doubted if he had any notable genius. He was keenly fitted to his work, he had the boundless energy of youth, and he was in love.

Here was the secret — and it *was* a secret — of his thirst for glory; he was in love — beautifully and seriously in love. He had spoken a few words with a young woman who possessed — for him, at least — unusual grace and beauty, and straightway without leave or warrant, he built up about her the romance of his life. He reconstructed his whole world on a new and magnificent scale, and in the midst of it he set Diana Fortune as a fountain and a shrine. In such moments as he could claim for his own, out of the whirl and dust of his vocation, he thought of her and dreamed of her and wrote letters to her.

But she received none of them. Spanishburg fell quietly into the hands of the Union Army shortly after the departure of the Confederates and remained in their possession until the following winter. Even the letters that he wrote to Eagle Bend went astray or were destroyed as contraband.

The letters that a messenger took to Spanishburg fared no better. Micajah Lea, who had earned by his marksmanship in Mexico the sobriquet of Old Thousand-Yards, went home on horse furlough, journeying warily on foot. He was the only old

man in the command, a hawk-eyed, bearded old frontiersman, intrepid and resourceful. Among the letters entrusted to him by Marmaduke was one for Diana; it was a love letter only in its spirit and cordial essence; the literal words of love were not set down. He took such joy in its writing that he was half loath to part with it. The old scout came back with a fresh horse, but shamelessly confessed to the loss of the letters in a tavern, where he got drunk and was robbed of all that he had. As the letters disappeared forever, it is likely that the thief, finding in them no military information, threw them on the fire; but Marmaduke writhed to think of a backwoods tavern ruffler making free with that gay, whimsical, extravagant outpouring to Diana.

After that he wrote no more, but Diana continued to be the compelling motive of his life. There was nothing worthy that he did but it was because of her; he never went out to fight but her name rose to his lips; he never emerged from a skirmish without first the sweet thought of her and next kind gratitude to whatever gods (he was something of a Pagan) had so arranged it that he might hope to see her again. Love touches some men into dreamy contemplation and inaction, but Diana, who had a most human love of power, might have thrilled to know what a trail of fire and sword was laid when she touched this partisan heart with desire.

Near the end of summer Marmaduke with five

hundred men, picked chiefly from the old regiment, went flying through Kentucky on a long and hazardous raid. They came out of it on a burning day in September, scarred with hard fighting, galled with hard riding, sunburnt, unshaven, and unregenerately bragging of their victories and spoils.

It was near the end of that last hot day when they went into camp. A few leagues further on was the Cumberland River; beyond that was Home. Marmaduke had said — it was reported — that as a reward for their services they should have the honor of recovering Spanishburg and wintering there. This was the news that passed from mouth to mouth as the men watered their horses; and the sudden clamor of comment, chaffing, drolling, yawping and hooraying, indicated that those long-haired young soldiers were deeply pleased.

It was interesting to look down the line, as they lolled in their saddles, at the infinite variety of faces. Here were calm, phlegmatic faces; bearded, solemn faces, stroked by hairy hands; lean, grim, bilious faces; fiery-red and freckled faces; sharp, humorous, peaked faces; refined and high-bred faces; and the pallid faces, too, of those who set the will to overcome the sickness of the flesh — Confederate faces — American faces!

Quickly the horses were unsaddled, corralled and fed. By the time the sun had left the sycamores most of the troopers were snoring in the grass.

A few stood about the bivouac fires, roasting fresh-slaughtered beef on sticks. Others stretched with their pipes in the grass, finding the luxurious taste of rest and tobacco too sweet to swap at once for tasteless sleep. And down on the bank of the creek, dejected, homesick, sat Peter Dorgan, bathing his feet and thinking black thoughts. He was solitary. No one "ran" with Peter, he had no "buddy," no one cared to be known as his friend. This was not merely because he was callow and tow-headed, nor because his voice was changing, going from deep basso to falsetto, all in the same breath, nor because he was generally juvenile and half-baked, for many another lad in the cavalry was all these things and worse, without prejudice to his standing. Peter had a fault more flagrant; he was the butt of the command because he was a notorious coward. It was a grim life for Peter. He found himself among hard-riding, hard-fighting men who ridiculed him incessantly; he found that being a cavalryman meant simply hard work by night and by day, and hunger and deadly peril. Fortification against these was a matter neglected in his education and left out of his philosophy. He had no stomach for the business.

Speaking in a cavalry sense, he had one virtue. He could shoot. Even Old Thousand-Yards admitted this. He had spent many of his days in shooting squirrels — Dick Upshaw had taught him — and he

proved his skill before the whole brigade. Further, he had brought with him into the army his own mare, pedigreed, most fleet and staunch; and by reason of these qualifications he had been admitted into the detachment which went on the renowned September Raid. The men of that detachment were very humorous and horsey, and the genius of swashbuckler deviltry was in them all. All, that is, but Peter Dorgan.

Peter was afraid. The men laughed at him, and Dr. Lockspur filliped blood in his face when dressing wounds to hear him plead, "Oh, don't!"

Dr. Lockspur was now the chief surgeon of the brigade. His great object in life, apparently, was to amuse himself with much energy. He turned his attention to Peter Dorgan, whom he called the Blue Hen's Chicken, in mocking allusion to his bravery, and badgering the lad became his avocation throughout most of the raid. He was not vindictive nor consciously cruel; his idea was to be funny.

The day was gone. It was while Peter was chewing the unsavory cud of retrospection, with his feet in the water, that Dr. Lockspur came into the radius of the mess fire, filled with the satisfaction of the teller of bad tidings.

"I've been on a scout," he said to Upshaw. "I found that Drawbridge took the Ragweed road for

the Cumberland River this morning with over a thousand web-feet."

Now this was news — portentous news; but Colonel Upshaw, who was crumbling some tobacco in his palm, merely nodded.

"Where does the Ragweed road cross the Cumberland?" someone asked.

"At the Valley Ford," said Lockspur.

"That's where this road crosses, too," observed Upshaw.

"Yes," said Lockspur. "That's the ford we are depending on. I reckon Drawbridge aims to beat us there."

Upshaw took out his short black pipe with the heathen idol's head, examined it critically, filled it carefully, and smoked reflectively, nodding and slowly blinking. "Who was with you?" he asked, after a time.

"Old Thousand-Yards. There wasn't anybody else, was there, Cajah?"

"Jist me and you, Doc," said the gigantic scout. "But hold now — I believe we took along some kind of a towhead to hold the hosses, didn't we? Sogrum, or some sich name — I disrecollect."

"Oh, yes — the Blue Hen's Chicken!" said Lockspur.

It had grown very dark down by the creek. There was an odor of peppermint, and a certain cool taste in the air distinguished the night from prime sum-

mer. How loud sang the katydids! They reminded Peter of talking to Lorena under the oaks.

He felt he could never see her again now. She would surely hear tales of his cowardice. And that he was a coward was proved. He had been told so frequently, with curses. Under every fire he had blanched, shirked, skulked; he would have fled, had that been possible. He had recognized himself as a coward. He had tried to reconcile himself with such a defect in his character, and he had to some extent succeeded.

For he had to live. The odd thing was, life seemed indispensable and desirable, even if it were not sweet! He overheard them talking about him at headquarters.

"Lockspur, by ganney, you oughtn't to abuse that kid so much," said Colonel Upshaw. "I'd not be so hard on him. He's just a boy. Give a dog a bad name and kill him, you know."

The Doctor, smoking, conceived what he regarded as a bright idea. He turned to Upshaw in a serious manner, his blue eyes gleaming solemnly. "Colonel Upshaw, you misconceive me strangely in this matter; you mistake my point of view." He cleared his throat; he knew that Peter had not gone far in the darkness and would likely overhear him; to make this a certainty he raised his voice. "I never joke on facts," he asserted. "If my young friend Dorgan were really a craven soul, I wouldn't carry

on about it; my sense of delicacy would forbid it."

"You and your sense of delicacy," murmured Upshaw.

"Truly," said the Doctor, "when it comes to the test there are two kinds of courage, and you must carefully distinguish. There is physical courage, which is common enough, and there is moral courage, which is rare. You have seen Peter turn pale and tremble during action, haven't you? Well, does that mean that he is fixing to run? Not at all. It means simply that he is becoming, or is about to become, potentially dangerous. It is the expression of a high-strung disposition, which he possesses in common with great artists and poets — in short, it is moral courage that he has — the superior kind. If you, or I, had a high-strung nervous temperament like Peter's we'd run like sheep. Peter? Why, if it comes to a showdown, Peter's as brave a man as ever bit a cartridge!"

"You won't do, Lockspur!" Upshaw said indulgently; his big frame quaked with gentle laughter. "Ain't he a case?" grumbled Old Thousand-Yards. "He's a Doc!" said some one else, and the men fell to snickering.

But Peter did not hear them. He heard only Lockspur's voice, and the words thrilled him like sweet music; he took it all seriously, for he was vain and guileless. *He* was the man of whom these things were said — he — Peter Dorgan! The crude

irony was lost on him. The surgeon's poor joke had all the surprise and thrill of discovered treasure. He returned to the bivouac singing softly:

A hundred months have passed, Lorena,
Since last I held that hand in mine,
And felt that pulse beat fast, Lorena,
Though mine beat faster far than thine!
A hundred months — 'twas flowery May
When up the hilly slope we climbed
To watch the dying of the day,
And hear the distant church bells chimed,
To watch —

"Stop that infernal song, will you?" growled a tired dragoon. It made Confederates homesick.

"Lockspur," said Colonel Upshaw, "did you tell *him* about that outfit?"

"No, dash it, I didn't," said Lockspur. "And by gad, I'm not going to. He told me if I didn't stay with the column today he'd put me under arrest as sure as my name's Jack. Here Peter," he added, as his eye fell on Dorgan, "go tell Colonel what that galoot said out yonder on the Ragweed road. Tell him all about it, but don't let on I was along."

Peter found the commanding officer consulting about the roads with Major Bullitt, the brigade adjutant-general. A Kentucky soldier, who acted as guide, was in attendance, and they had a map spread out in the firelight. The boy stood tremblingly in the edge of the light, waiting an opportunity to speak.

Marmaduke displayed no insignia; he wore a gray flannel shirt, open at the neck, homespun trousers and dusty thigh-boots. He was not quite twenty-six years of age, but already his riders called him the Old Man — a purely honorary title. For the sunburned face of the commanding officer was that of a youth. Youth glowed in his eyes, and spoke in his sudden catching laughter; sometimes he sang in the saddle, carrying the air for a raucous chorus. It may have been a trick — it may have been the man's immense capacity for kindness, but every private of the line looked upon Henry Marmaduke as his immediate personal friend.

"Who's there?" said he.

"Private Dorgan, sir," said Peter, in a deep voice; "with information," he added, in a squeak.

"Well, tell us about it," said Marmaduke.

Peter stood at attention, and told as good a story as he could.

"This is rather important, Peter," said Marmaduke. He considered the boy smilingly.

He had about given over the hope of making a soldier out of Peter. That the lad was the laughing stock of the brigade he knew very well, but he had chosen to treat the matter with persistent irrecognition. And Peter was grateful. He admired the Doctor and feared him; to Colonel Upshaw he was indebted for much kindness, but his attitude toward Henry Marmaduke was one of unmixed adoration.

The Colonel turned to the Kentuckian and verified Peter's report about the roads.

"The news is very timely, Dorgan; I think you ought to have a feather in your cap for this," he said. "We'll make you a corporal in the Company of Scouts. Now hurry off and go to sleep! — Major Bullitt, we shall have to shake a leg, eh?"

Major Bullitt, with great dignity, allowed that such was the case; he wrote down Marmaduke's orders and went off, taking the guide with him. The night was still, except for the screech of the katydids, and the browsing of the horses. Now and then the challenge of a distant vedette was heard; the ripe odors of the field were distilled with the heavy dew, and the full moon stood out clear above the valley.

Peter Dorgan crept under his blanket, but his sleep was broken and brief. He dreamed of Lorena Bell. He dreamed she came and took his two hands and printed a light kiss on his forehead — she, the unattainable Lorena! — and said she had not understood him until now, and that all the things they said about him were lies, and that he was the bravest of the brave. And then he dreamed of riding with a great message to the Colonel between ridges whose summits crackled with musketry, and his horse would not go fast, for his spurs would not bite.

And then the keen bugles blew.

Peter opened his eyes to see the men springing to their feet and rolling their blankets.

To him, as usual, the reveille brought a sinking of the heart. He was revolted against it all — the evil-smelling blankets, the eternal sweat of horses, the hurrying and hardship, and the menace of death! He wished he could let this bloody band of rangers ride on and leave him behind. He recalled with anguish that there was to be, perhaps, an important fight that day.

Day? Was it day? There was no morning wind, no gray light of dawn. The moon was shining cold and full towards its zenith.

Suddenly and swiftly, like hawks from a wood, the five hundred horsemen swept out along the road in the September moonlight.

"A hard ride and a damned hard fight!" cried Upshaw. "Who'll follow Marmaduke? Three cheers for Marmaduke!" A barbaric cry answered him: "I!" — "I!" — "I!"

That far sounding yell of Marmaduke's men had a history of its own. The first time Marmaduke called for volunteers to perform a particular and dangerous service, three officers — among them was Lockspur — stood close by him, so that when he called, *"Who will volunteer?"* they at once drew their swords with a flourish and cried out, "I!" — "I!" — "I!" The ringing pronoun tickled the fancy of the men, most of whom would have said *"Me."* The unregenerate began to imitate the sound: it was heard everywhere, by day or night,

on the skirmish line, and when a rabbit was started; but so clearly did it peal from the tongue that the whole regiment fell seriously in love with it. And thus the first person singular pronoun became the warcry of Marmaduke's Cavalry. . . .

Ah, that ride in the valleys and mountains! Peter presently waked up, and was wrought upon by the subtle beauty of the night, buoyed and elated by the memory of what the Doctor said and the kindness of the Colonel. The road sought the gaps in the ridges. Sometimes the column was passing through deep ravines, where the air was damp and cool, smelling of sweet, ripe papaw, and the horses splashed through spring branches; and again the cavalcade was mounting by the narrow road over some pine-scented hill whose summit was warm and dry

Marmaduke turned and looked with a pleased eye upon the stalwart dragoons winding upon the road in the brilliant moonlight; he heard the clack of two thousand hoofs; he saw the shine on guns and scabbards and buckles, with here and there the red spark of cigar or pipe; he heard the strain and creak of leather, the snort and whinny of the horses, and the rough jocular talk: he loved the sight and sound of it all.

All about his horsemen, as they rode through the long night, ranged the silent, misty ridges, and toward morning a cold river fog rolled to meet them

in the valley. As the troopers wound past, the katydids clung silent to the boughs, resuming their nocturnal concert only when the songs, whoops, and laughter had died away. As the night wore on the turbulence of spirit subsided; lips were dry; backs ached; many slept in the saddle.

The fog grew dense, the moon came to look like a dull-worn silver coin, and fowls crowed far and near. Day was coming, stealthily, over the Kentucky hills.

"Thar's the Ragweed road yonder," said the guide.

Marmaduke took note of the copious dust at the junction. "Drawbridge has gone in," said he, and he halted the column. It was now indubitable morning.

From the mist ahead came the rattle of carbines. A bright fire of reanimation ran down the line of haggard faces. Out of the mist, too, came Peter Dorgan, galloping wildly, his cheeks pale as paper. Men and officers fell to laughing. Peter stuck upon his horse, cold and sick. He had gone forward with a part of the staff to join the advance, which had fallen afoul of the enemy's pickets, and when a bullet cried in his ear he had but one thought, which was to flee. His fright sat upon him like an incubus, so that when the Colonel asked sharply, "What was that firing?" he could not even stammer a syllable in reply.

Lockspur came and told of the stampede.

"Drawbridge is over there, about three miles off, covering the gap in the ridge," said he. "It's the only way too."

"We are going through it," said Marmaduke.

The morning-glories were half drowned with dew, and the sun came up in the fog, void of radiance. Shortly the mists lifted, and shadows stretched from tree to tree. A few miles away two long bluffs rose upon the plain, holding cool, purple shadows against their breasts. Below them, blocking the way to the cleft between, stood the waiting line of the enemy.

Marmaduke raked them with his glasses.

"I wonder they haven't occupied the heights," he said. There was a thicket to clear of skirmishers, and then the dragoons were pressing their tired horses through corn fields, where the hungry beasts snatched at ripening ears.

The attack was made savagely and suddenly. To Peter it seemed as if great gongs were ringing, for the men were firing from the saddle. He did not know they were so near the enemy until a white volley crashed from where his ranks stood at the edge of the corn fields, and horses screamed. Then all in a moment, before the enemy could reload, the hungry squadrons struck him, wielding revolvers, sabers, and the butts of their guns. It seemed a piece of magic, an instant's work. The infantry fell back among the trees and rocks.

The way to the ford was clear!

The cavalry did not pause, but swept into the pass, carrying their wounded with them.

"We haven't time to whip these fellows," said Marmaduke. "The thing to do is to get the command over the river. Go on with your men, Colonel Upshaw, while I watch the rear."

But there was a crush of horses down the pass, and a waving of hands. The column pressed against the advance, and halted.

I went to the river
And I couldn't git across!

piped Billy Webster, and a hundred others bawled, "River's up!"

Who could have dreamed of unseasonable mountain rains? Angry and yellow, mottled with speeding drift, snarling at the knees of the cliffs, and with a spiteful eddy swirling high in the mouth of the gorge whose trees had concealed it, the insuperable stream spread before them, a flying plain of bellowing waters!

The raiders found themselves in a triangular area, the base of which was the impassable river, and the sides of which were the abrupt shoulders of the bluffs; these rose sheer from the water and extended away from the river, almost meeting at the apex of the triangle where the road entered. This pass,

through which the Confederates had come, was suddenly occupied by the enemy, like a gate shutting behind them. Marmaduke's men were in a *cul-de-sac*. A word went down the line: "Trapped, by God!"

CHAPTER VIII

PETER DORGAN

OLD THOUSAND-YARDS sat sideways in his saddle and lighted his pipe. "'Bleeged to fight back now, I reckon."

"Yes, we swallowed that bait beautifully," said Lockspur.

"Well, hit hain't the bait we swallered," said the giant; "hit's this yer sniv'lin' cat-bird that turns my stomick!" and he shook his rough fist at Peter Dorgan. The fist was covered with blood.

"Many a brave man abhors the thought of a bloody death," said Dr. Lockspur, solemnly, recalling his joke.

Then the Colonel came and took a squadron to re-open the neck of the pass. The whole command was faced about. It was easy to get into that place; to get out again was another affair.

As the cavalry went back up against the infantry a cloud of rattling white flashes enveloped their opponents, and a cross fire poured down from the steep timber. Some of the advancing troopers pushed on, others rolled in the sedge, and Peter saw the enemy's fire running from flank to flank.

And then a sudden clap of thunder came from

the heights near the river, and echoed from bluff to bluff; and then there was another. The shrapnel ranged diagonally; there were oaths and squealings; every head was turned.

"Why, Lockspur, they have a battery up there!" said Marmaduke, in an injured tone. Lockspur laughed.

Peter saw Colonel Marmaduke directing the charge, his face afire; he heard the guns boom again; he saw Colonel Upshaw's big gray mare sink to her belly; he saw the regimental colors fall. Colonel Upshaw picked them up. Then a shell burst. Peter felt his own mare stumbling and falling; a laurel bough struck his face, and for a time he knew no more.

When he came to himself he was in a gully, with boughs above him. The attack had proved a failure; the Confederates were still hemmed up in the gorge. There were a few scattering shots, like the dripping of the woods after the rain. Crippled horses started to rise. Men were slipping and crawling in the sedge.

Peter, benumbed and white, pulled himself up into the dense laurel. He fingered presently a narrow ledge of dirt and stones, and he climbed upon it. It was a sheep path, and led in a winding way under the laced boughs, up the face of the bluff; he had seen the like before, and understood. He had not crawled above a dozen yards when he came up

against Colonel Upshaw, who was trying to dress his own wounds with a piece of his shirt.

"Where are you wounded, Colonel?" asked Peter.

"In the arm and in the shoulder and in other places, by ganney, too delicate to mention, my son," said Colonel Dick Upshaw, cheerfully. "Lend me a hand, will you?"

Peter gave him all the help he could, but he gagged over the blood.

"Slip along," said Colonel Upshaw, "and see what you can see. Take the flag, too."

Peter went on, helping himself with the color staff, for a toilsome distance, up, far up, until he came to a place where, by parting the laurel beside a protruding boulder, he could see the grimy artillerists serving the guns. He sat down to rest.

The Confederate attack was renewed under the smoke. He could not see it all. The troopers deployed, dismounted. Bent low, clutching their carbines, they glided up the slope like panthers. They staggered and wavered under a sudden volley; he heard the oaths of the officers and the sharp yell of the rally; he saw them go forth with rolling, spurting smoke. The smoke grew thicker and thicker; the volleys of the enemy sounded like the steady crash of a trip hammer. The sedge was afire in places; he could smell it, and there was another odor lifting upward — the fetor of blood

and mangled bodies. For the guns above him cut away the little supporting line with a deadly enfilade. Peter saw them coming back.

As the fire slackened he felt the blood in his head pounding heavily. He was frightened about as much as he could be.

And then there came an utterly new sensation. It was like the burning that comes in the face and limbs of one coming in from the cold to a snug fire. It was reaction — O god of battles, it was anger! He remembered the great white bloody face of Upshaw, his Colonel, who was kind to him — he remembered hotly the things the Doctor said, and Colonel Marmaduke's praise.

And he found a thing to do. His pockets and cartridge box were full. He had not fired a shot. He unslung his carbine. A moment later it banged under the laurel. The sergeant in charge of the nearest piece jerked back, rested for a moment with his hand upon the escabel, and sank.

Peter drew back to load. There is something steadying in charging a muzzle-loading rifle, and he began to feel cool as he bit his cartridges and rammed home the balls. He began to please himself with the fancy that these smoky cannoneers were in reality but large squirrels. It served his aim, and he averaged a man for every two or three shots. He had no idea how many there were, or what reserves they had, but he argued in a simple way

that it would be a good thing to shoot as many as he could. He was fired at repeatedly. He did not care. The Peter Dorgan who collapsed at the wailing of the bullets was another person. In anger and incandescent hatred he had passed some strange climacteric; the latent brave blood at last was stirred — at last! The nearest piece was trained upon him; he rolled under the rock, and there was a concussion that made his nose bleed. It was a fatal mistake. Surely the great Alchemist was watching narrowly his darling experiment — the making of a man! For the angle was too great; the gun leaped like a wild animal from the trunnion-plates, breaking the cap-squares, and the piece itself pitched down the cliff.

There was but one cannon in action now. A calm exultation possessed him; he gloried in the exercise of power — a sweet novelty indeed to him — and he hummed to himself as he rammed home a cartridge:

The years glide slowly by, Lorena!

He wondered why they did not send someone down to kill him. He did not know it was because of his marksmanship. There was none to send.

In the ravine Marmaduke's gallant fellows were rallying about their chief. They were not five hundred now. The Colonel had ridden far and

boldly within the enemy's lines with the resolute handful of rangers upon whom he had staked so much; and he was penned like a bull in a stockade.

But Peter heard the old defiant yell as they formed once more for desperate work. He fired the last rifle cartridge at a lank artilleryman who was preparing to send a shell into the formation. He heard the far cry of his own bullet and knew he had missed.

He sprang from cover with a passionate scream. He feared nothing. His paramount desire was to kill. He dug his heels into the red soil, swiftly pushing himself up with the color staff. Ten feet from the ledge, where the field piece was posted, he was fired upon. The head of a sponge staff whiffed past his ear, and he crouched in the shelving dirt, and with his revolver shot the artillerist — there was but one — through the body.

Then in a moment he stood with his arm about the heated cannon, the burn of the sun on his neck, waving the silk flag and cheering hoarsely in unspeakable exultation!

Oh, if Lorena could see him!

The men in the theater below saw the old flag puffing significantly in the morning wind, and Marmaduke knew now, and all the Old Squadron knew, where the regimental colors were. A hoarse thrilling clamor pealed along the line of skirmishers.

Peter could not understand why he was not shot. About him lay the dead gunners in all attitudes.

He did not care for that. He set the color staff upright in the cheek rings, and pulled the carriage about, and worked at the elevating screw, and pulled the lanyard. The projectile snarled high and far, and burst precisely in the gap in the midst of the enemy. It was fool's luck, but Peter did not know it; he stood at ease, elate in his new character, the Master of the Situation, and he hummed his song as he delved in the caisson:

A hundred months have passed, Lorena.

He did not see what bright feverish eyes were watching him until he heard a voice:

"Has your mother any more like you?"

One of the artillerymen was trying to sit up, his thumb pressed into his femoral artery.

"Oh, will you have a drink?" said Peter. He tossed him a canteen.

"Thanks," said the artillerist. "Did you ever fight artillery?"

"I've practiced with howitzers. I know how. You hoped I didn't know, didn't you?" said Peter brightly. It appeared to him he had never made such a neat speech. But indeed he could not help wondering who he was — he, himself!

"Why don't they send you reinforcements?" he asked. He was shelling the enemy's center now in a businesslike way. They wavered for one fatal

instant. Peter Dorgan's shells carried the balance of power. With hoarse yells the dismounted cavalrymen raged through the gap.

"Don't you worry," said the artillerist hopefully. "It takes a quarter of an hour for to get up here by the way we come. You'll ketch lead in just a minute."

It was even less. Reinforcements for the battery came out on the mountain in time to see their own lines break and crumple in the valley. They did not stop to re-take the guns; they stood for a moment among the boulders on the summit, looking curiously at Peter Dorgan and the rebel flag on the ledge just below. Then a sharp command was given; a volley came from their rifles, and without so much as pausing to note the result they turned and fled along the mountain, for now their safety lay in speed of foot.

Peter grew numb in hands and chest. As he made a movement to re-charge the piece a sudden chill and nausea came over him, and a wave of homesickness and tender self-pity; and he lay down upon the stock of the carriage. It came very suddenly — a sense of exquisite, overpowering weariness, which he had no thought of resisting.

From beyond the ravine came the cheers of the Marmaduke cavalry — an eager, persistent tumult that told of definite success — "I!" — "I!" — "I!" — and again, "I!" — "I!" — "I!" —

How softly it sounded in his ears! The hills answered faintly — very faintly, and far away.

And on the bluffs once more there was silence. Almost one by one the crickets resumed their piping and the jarflies took up again their singing. High in the hot sky circled the buzzards. An ethereal spider line trailing from a tall pine caught the September morning sun and gleamed. Peter noted it with intense minuteness, and the men seemed cheering for many hours in the corn fields and timber. The trail of the carriage under him was very wet and of a bright red. And he heard the flag softly snapping, snapping very softly, above him in the warm air . . .

The artillerist threw the canteen within his reach. "Your turn, Bud," he said. But the boy did not notice it. He lay on the gunstock, quiet and white, his eyes filmed like a winged quail's.

"He came up in a balloon, I guess," said the artillerist, when Henry Marmaduke came. "We couldn't git out of his range — there wasn't room. He unlimbered and plunked us one by one, so blasted regular that some got afeared of him and run. The thing ain't possible. I seen it done, and yit I say, it ain't possible! We brought them guns up piece by piece, too, and belonged to the finest battery in the service. No, I don't want no water. Gimme a drink of whiskey!"

"Not Dorgan?" said Colonel Marmaduke.

"Was it really you? Was there no one to help you? My brave lad, are you badly hurt?"

"Yes, sir, I think I am."

Peter raised himself and fell forward with swimming eyelids. Marmaduke caught him in his strong arms and put his head for a time over his heart.

"Gentlemen, this boy has saved this command, and he is going out," he said, and a hardening came in his throat.

The little dragoon's head fell backward. . . . If Lorena could see him *now!*

CHAPTER IX

MARMADUKE BECOMES FAMOUS

THEY stopped on the mountain to bury the boy in the red soil, and the cannon he had captured was up-ended in the head of his grave, to serve him for a monument. "We done him onjestice," said one of the troopers.

"Yes, sir, we done him onjestice," said Old Thousand-Yards. Shame and curiosity contended in the faces of the men as they crowded about the open ditch, to view the last of Peter Dorgan. Living, he was not much to look at; dead, he was far less — a wry-faced little white corpse that seemed somehow unconnected with the wildly brave and compelling deed that made his name forever a glory to the command. Then the dirt fell, and the rifles volleyed, and the bugles pealed, and the rangers rode down the river, with little sleep or rest, until they crossed the borders of Tennessee. Lockspur lingered long after the others were gone, lettering the boy's name and years upon the cannon with a bone chisel from his field kit, smoking endless pipes. He had few words for any man during the rest of that raid.

To Marmaduke the tragic death of the boy was a

great shock; it gripped him sharply. There were other graves at Valley Ford and elsewhere, but this was the first he had digged for a friend. For with Peter he had a friendship, if such can be called a friendship where there is an affectionate tolerance on the one side and adoring loyalty and hero-worship on the other. He had been fond of Peter — how good it was to remember that he had always been kind to him! This callow youth, the least significant of all his friends, had turned the tide of destiny. But for him the career of Marmaduke and his temerarious troop would have ended in a pitiful fiasco. It was a lesson — signal, serious, never-to-be-forgotten. It was not without humility that he received it; he thought upon it long and long. The death of Peter Dorgan made him a better man.

The expedition fixed Marmaduke's fame securely. The imaginative Southern people caught up his name and made it a synonym for daring adventure. That he was very young, took nothing from its luster; the papers and orators called him "The gallant Marmaduke," and the women would have spoiled him, had his way fallen among cities. But his post was in the back country; as a reward for his dashing expedition, his command was put upon picket duty. This meant simply useful drudgery, not without dust and danger, but there was little chance for the spectacular performances, the charging and hurrah that the rangers had learned to love.

December found them in the hill country, within a day's march of Spanishburg, which had become of some importance to the Confederate line of communication. So urgent was he in his demand for its recapture that Marmaduke was given permission to move in the enemy's rear and attack the place whenever it suited him.

The men were gay over the news but there was not, in the whole command, a heart more eager than the commander's. "By Christopher, I'll move tomorrow!" he said.

CHAPTER X

THE MEETING

IT WAS a cold gray winter afternoon in Tennessee; bleak fields, over which the auburn broomsedge trembled; bad roads, frozen hard as limestone; red clay banks, whose crust was raised by stools of frost; uncertain sunlight, which now painted the near tree trunks with amber, now picked out a naked white sycamore by distant waters; far-off dream-like mountains, holding frost and shadow in their coves; a whisper of dry leaves, a biting wind, a bitter sky — in short, as I said before, it was a cold gray winter afternoon in Tennessee.

Marmaduke had ridden away from the camps, unattended. He had made all his arrangements to move; the column was to march at the earliest light. All day he had been housed at headquarters; now he had an hour's freedom, and he struck his horse with his hat. The ruffled animal bounded forward eagerly, and the horseman, bending in the saddle, took the wind joyously.

He had seen the death of comrades, he had known great weariness, hunger and danger. He had looked the horrors of war in the face until he had acquired a sort of stoicism, whereby he was no longer an

emotional prodigal, but conserved his sympathy to wise and practical ends. His buoyancy survived. That personal attribute we call spirits, which in a soldier is a superior appetite for life and a good-humored scorn of death, remained in him undimished: his heart was sovereign.

He carried a blanket, a pair of revolvers and his saber; over his service suit of gray he wore an ample waterproof, with a deep riding-cape, well lined with cotton. This neutral-tinted garment was to play the part of a friend before the ride was over, but its color was none of his choosing, it came of the spoils. Many other things he possessed, including his gold-bordered saddle blanket, which had been a Federal officer's, had come from the same source. Marmaduke in his old slate-colored cloak was not easily recognized as a Confederate officer, but his men knew him from afar.

A band of them saw him in the woods, and set up a yell, and in a few moments surrounded him. They were a part of the "Old Squadron," as they loved to designate the original regiment, returning from a scout. A wild-looking, truculent set they were, unshaven, greasy and ragged in faded cottonade, armed with picturesque weapons and very free in their speech, and they wished to know why the Colonel rode alone.

The enemy was moving several brigades on various roads, they said. "There's a big slew of

web-feet right in them woods!" said Old Thousand-Yards. "Now you jist look out, Colonel; there hain't no sense in you cavortin' around and exposin' of yourself as if you wasn't no more value to the army than me or Jim Crookshanks, or Johnny Grass here."

But Marmaduke put them off and resumed his ride. When he turned the bend of the road he saw the small company sitting their horses in the highway, deeply engaged in consultation. They made a striking little picture, their hats a-cock, their gun-barrels shining, their shadows falling across the banks of the cut. He did not believe there ever were, or ever could be, better soldiers than these ragged starvelings of his, so shrewd and bold, so chipper and "sassy" and ready for a scrap! The subject of their conference was Marmaduke himself, and his notorious disregard for his own personal safety. While they considered the advisability of shadowing him, he disappeared from sight.

As a matter of fact he had no sound military reasons for riding out unprotected. It was true he wished to look over the country with his glass from the ridge tops, but chiefly he desired — indispensable privilege — to be alone for awhile. To be deprived of access to solitude is to some people a serious matter, and to Marmaduke it was in the nature of a necessity to be quit at times of the turmoil of headquarters and the palaver of friends and fol-

lowers, and to refresh himself in seclusion, as Antaeus renewed his strength by contact with the earth. But his desire for a lonely ride this afternoon led him very quickly into a series of wholly unexpected adventures.

He was singing as he rode. Great colonnades of pine, oak and chestnut crowded the narrow road, and touched their leafless tops above it. It was chilly in these depths; he turned up the collar of his greatcoat, and let his horse have his head.

It was while he was riding thus, at a furious gallop, that a voice almost in his ear made him check his speed, and blush, for he was singing. His first feeling was humiliation. His men warned him, and he had laughed at them.

The soldier who hailed him wore neither butternut nor gray, but was one of a group so numerous as to give a blue tint to the frosty shadows of the trees. Though he lessened his speed he was among them and beyond them all in a moment. He did not dare to show, by stopping, that he was in the wrong place.

Happily the Federal soldiers seemed wholly unsuspicious. It did not occur to them that a rebel horseman would be so unwary as to ride plump into a brigade of infantry. Diablo's impulse carried him over the crest of a ridge, and he saw the soldiers he had passed were but the flankers of a still greater force marching upon an intersecting road.

Confused murmurs reached his ears, occasional laughter, and a deep rumbling. He glanced back. Curiously, but not suspiciously, the flankers were watching him.

Plainly, there was no returning. He pushed on, coming immediately upon the crossroad; the enemy filled it, plodding humped and weary at the route-step. Here was no mere detachment — here was the Union Army, the long, blue, bantering column of march! He bore down the line toward the rear, meeting the fire of the company humorists.

"Oh, you can't fool a fly! There's a man in them boots! Oh, I see you, man! Come out o' them boots!" The ancient gags of the column attested at least the efficiency of his waterproof, and gave a cover for whatever embarrassment he might show. "Come out of them boots, man!" the company wag continued. "I know you're in there!" — "There's a man on that hoss!" announced another, solemnly. "Hold that hoss, man!"

The soldiers were marching from the opposite direction and turning off at the intersection. Both roads were blue as far as he could see. There was nothing to do but to ride down the line in the way he was going, and pray heaven none knew his face!

The least flurry or false move, and he knew he was lost. But because Marmaduke did not turn out for them, those in his way stepped aside for him, and, when they caught sight of his blazoned

blanket, saluted promptly. These salutes he returned with an appearance of absent indifference. It was only the officers and non-coms who were respectful. The irresponsible privates took him for a staff-officer, and therefore fair game. Every big-mouthed man in the ranks had his fling at him; he was barked at, hooted and jeered, in all the conceivable ways whereby the man who must walk takes vengeance on him who may ride. But in the multiplicity of his enemies lay his chance for safety. None was charged with the responsibility of his detection. There were hard looks, so it seemed to him, with a nascent glimmer of suspicion, and faces apparently so familiar that his pulse rang in his ears, but if any thought they knew him, or that this was a Confederate soldier in the wrong place, they gave no sign. He rode on unchallenged, his great fear being that the wind might whip up his coat flaps and expose his gray trousers.

There came a break in the column; a number of batteries followed, the sunshine gleaming on the polished barrels.

"Easy there! Don't jerk that horse that way!"

An unutterable pang shot through Marmaduke's heart. Could he mistake that voice? And if he mistook the voice, could he mistake that figure, that pale face? Could he mistake old Romilly's eyes? They were full of consternation as they met Marmaduke over the men and guns. Marmaduke held

them for a moment; Romilly looked upon the ground. The artillery moved away from him, and Marmaduke pressed forward, feeling the blood sinking from his face.

The fieldpieces streamed by; Marmaduke heard, as in a dream, the cries of the drivers, the heavy thump of caissons, jingle of chains, complaining of leather, the roll of great wheels. As he drew near to Romilly he saw that he was sickly pale. He was attired with his wonted elegance; field service seemed to have no power over his fastidiousness. Marmaduke, as he came abreast of him, even caught the scent of some aromatic which he had known his friend to keep in his clothes chest, and which swept him back, by a mechanical act of the memory, to the old room in the college barracks. Still Romilly's eyes ignored him, and then he heard him say, almost through closed lips —

"All right, now, Henry."

Had Romilly been content to let him pass in silence, he would have gone his way and left his friend to settle the matter with his conscience as best he might. But the other's face and strained manner betrayed most painfully his consciousness of making, on the score of old friendship, a costly sacrifice. The man was sworn to serve the Union; his personal powers in that direction were limited, for he had no great gift of soldiership; all that he could do was little. And here was an opportunity

for a signal service — his own life, yielded ten times over, could not make up for the escape of this intrepid and destructive Marmaduke, whose power for evil to the Union arms was a known quantity, and something to be reckoned with. His arrest could be made by lifting the voice.

A platoon of infantry passed by. The officer in command flashed a salute on catching sight of Marmaduke's gold-bordered blanket. The men stared indifferently. How could they read the drama in the hearts of these two quiet horsemen in the road?

"I knew that we should meet," said Romilly, when the soldiers had tramped by. He drew a deep, weary breath. "You know that you are in peril of your life, do you not? Lead out through the woods there and I will follow."

Marmaduke's bent brows framed a tense inquiry. For the moment the peril of his own predicament was less vivid to him than the pitiful dilemma of his old friend.

"There is a strange fatality here, and I am sick of it. When your sharpshooters at Valley Ford picked off my men, I came myself and shot the boy who had captured and turned one of my pieces. It was poor little Peter Dorgan. And I tell you I am sick of it. God help you, Henry," he cried, "you would be hanged for a spy!"

"A spy!" cried Marmaduke. "This is no disguise! I wear this thing in the field, and I came

here by the most awkward accident and unpardonable carelessness."

"I guessed as much, but no courtmartial in the country would see it that way," said Romilly, very quietly. "Come, Harry, we are losing time."

Marmaduke's lips were white. He was a proud man; it is no casual thing to receive your life as a present from any man. He breathed a sudden deep breath and caught up his reins. "Well, it is no more than I would do for you, Dave," he said.

At this Romilly rode away through the timber, Marmaduke following. When they had passed beyond sight and hearing of any soldiery, Marmaduke stopped.

"This is far enough," he said. "Good-by, Romilly; I hope this friendly turn will not bring you any trouble — and God bless you!"

"Good-by, Marmaduke," said Romilly; he turned away rather quickly, and hurried back to the lines.

Marmaduke looked after him. He knew Romilly. The man had an almost morbid sense of duty, setting it above the world, and life and death, and for the love of a friend he had trampled it into the dust!

"Well, it was no more than I would have done for him," repeated Marmaduke to himself; his heart was full as he set spur and plunged into the brush.

CHAPTER XI

A SOLITARY RIDE

THE shades of evening were gathering in the valleys when, after a wide circle through the woods, he regained the highway. He had ridden hastily, yet somewhat aimlessly, being too greatly taken up with his thoughts and feelings to consider carefully the direction he was going. The rencounter with Romilly had moved him deeply. He was still breathing somewhat fast when he cleared the low rail fence and reined up his horse in the road.

From the west he could still hear faintly the rumble of the journeying soldiery. Romilly had presented him with his freedom on the wrong side of the column; the Union forces were between him and his camp. The movement, he was well assured, was only a part of an unimportant shifting of troops to a better position and more comfortable quarters; doubtless the marching would continue for hours after dark. In the meantime he was cut off.

The dropping sun, breaking through a rift in the gray cloud, sent his shadow stretching down the road to the east. His horse, quite fresh and eager, moved restlessly under him; he patted the animal's

soft coat, which was ruffled with the cold, and listened again, smiling, to the distant murmur of the Federal troops in the west.

There was no going back; he could not rejoin his command; he must spend that night abroad. Very well, it should be his, he would follow his desires. With a light, joyous laugh he touched spur to his horse and dashed away on the trail of his shadow — his face aglow, his cape and his thick curling hair flying in the wind — away to the east, over the hills to Spanishburg — and Diana Fortune!

His horse had another touch of the spur before he could realize what his rider expected of him, and Marmaduke laughed again as the powerful creature, gathering up his strength and fleetness, laid himself to the work: with another touch he took the bit and ran away. Marmaduke did not stay the rein but laughed aloud, exultantly, as the wind roared in his ears.

He rode in the glory of youth and passion, in high adventurous impulse, and mile after mile went by before he checked his pace. It was not until sunset that he drew his horse down to a steadier gait.

The country before him, fluted with lonely ridges, looked cold and vast and very beautiful in the afterlight. Here a long, frozen pool, half-submerging the roadside fence, was like a fallen strip of the pallid sky. There a few chickens, which had escaped the foragers of both armies, were going to rest by a

farmhouse, querulously adjusting their rights upon the branches. Far in the rear, lights appeared on the side of the darkening ridge — doubtless the enemy's campfires; they were far away. A woman crossed the road, carrying a water pail — a woman with a face so sad and careworn that Marmaduke's heart went out to her in a sudden commotion of pity: it was easy to tell what sort of story was hers. Through a low kitchen window he saw a family, or part of a family, sitting down to supper by the light of a tallowdip — a very old man and some children.

These things, and the solemn beauty of the winter evening, had a magnified power of suggestion for the solitary horseman; his imagination caught them up avidly.

On the summit of the broad plateau the night fell suddenly, and millions of stars came out. Though there was no wind here, the clouds were gone, and it was extremely cold. The eye could pierce only a little way into the obscurity of the hills, but overhead the stars made their presence effective, so solemn, so strange, so familiar — with what shuddering comments on life, yet with what benignant reassurance!

For any man in perfect health it is a lifting experience to ride through a winter night upon a long and dangerous journey, alone, quite alone. Such facts of life as the night and the stars bear to us a

very familiar relation, but Marmaduke could not ride so fast, or keep his mind in such deadlock with his own affairs as to escape the press of their power. It was in such hours as these that he knew himself best, and even the fact of time and space became no longer a baffling mental speculation, but was resolved into an emotional realization; it was in such times that he marveled that he or any other man should ever do an ignoble thing, or ever really doubt.

In the effulgent light of day the mystery of the universe was nearly always a thing apart, a private curiosity, an incredible something to be recognized and given over; but in the bigness and terror of that winter night, under the huge sidereal fields, it was felt with every frosty breath of air he inhaled. The forest itself, common and mild under the sun, took on a saturnine and solemn mien, as who should say: Did you think you knew me so well? Was I kindly and usual? Observe, I am savage and formidable, full of power and mystery! And he made a new definition of romance, which included all reality. In these expanded moments his senses were quickened and eager, and he lived at a higher power. The starlight was not mere starlight; he did not know what it was, except that it was something more. The sound of the horse's footfall became a palpable poetry. He did not remember that he was ever flippant or frivolous. Life was

rugged, austere, and joyous. He felt the warp of purpose in its fabric, powerful and continuous; he did not hazard a guess at what that purpose was; it did not occur to him to guess; it all seemed so clear!

A light appeared near the road, surrounded by a glow in the trees. As Marmaduke passed, he saw a bivouac fire, built under two great oaks. Two Union soldiers, either stragglers or scouts, sat together — two young men — looking into a fire of fallen limbs, before which a rabbit was roasting on sticks. The cold stillness was intense. The fagots crackled softly, the fire sending its sparks and light up among the bare oak branches, and lighting up the faces of the young men, who by their looks were brothers. A twig rattled down on the dry leaves; the hoot of an owl came out of the forest. The elder drew his arm about the younger protectingly. From the distance came the baying of a dog.

As he rode near them, the lads were aroused by the sound of his horse's hoof beats, and the elder of the two sprang up, grasped a rifle, and glared fiercely out into the darkness. The firelight showed their brass buttons and dark uniforms. Marmaduke moved by swiftly and silently.

It was a clear road, faintly luminous with starlight. Once or twice the horseman thought he heard hoof beats far in his rear, but this did not

annoy him; he had all confidence in his horse's wind. Now and then a dog barked by the roadside, or the chimney of an unseen cabin uttered sparks; rousing fires were the rule that night. The road went down into the wide valley, whose every lane and by-path he knew well, for he was nearing home. Field and wood went by in blurred, frigid masses. He grew drowsy at times, but always a great good-humor welled up within him. The night was very long.

In all forms of protracted physical exercise in the open air, the finer capacities of body and soul expand most nobly up to a certain point, which is where fatigue first really bites. After that a sort of ichor floats in the brain. There is a smiling heedlessness, a jaunty courage, a great concern for whims; solemnity taken turns with utter fatuity, until the mind refuses to attend to any further impressions, preferring to content itself with some ancient thought, or bit of song.

It was between midnight and morning when he reached the cabin of Joe Dockery, a secluded place among cedars, not far from Eagle Bend. Sparks were coming from the chimney, and a ray of light streaming through a knot hole in the shutter gave news that the master of the hovel was already up and about his affairs. Joe had often served as guide for Marmaduke and his friends on hunting trips in the Great Smoky Mountains, and he was

much esteemed by them as a man of woodcraft and philosophy.

Marmaduke drew rein at the door, and called his name. There was no answer and he called again. At this there was a sound of feet and chair legs striking the floor, and Joe, who had been meditating with his feet on the fire board, came and unbarred the door.

"Hello, Joe!" said Marmaduke.

"Hello yourself!" said Joe.

"How are you, Joe?"

"I'm jist only toll'able, I thank ye — doin' no good at all, ye might say," said Joe, who was too courteous to express the astonishment he felt. "I'm proud to see ye, Henry; won't ye 'light?" He passed out to take the visitor's horse. "Step in thar and set down by the fire, while I put up your beast."

The interior of the little cabin was glowing with warmth, and Marmaduke stretched his stiffened limbs to the blaze with a physical sense of gratitude for the comfort.

Joe came back with an armful of wood and mended the fire, and set some dishes on the table.

"I killed a shoat a-Tuesday," he said, "and this mornin' I woke up early and my stomach got to cravin' and fidgetin', and thinks I, I'll jist whirl in and cook me up a mess of somethin' soothin'. Hog's jowl," continued Joe, lifting the lid of the pot, "is

the soothin'est thing a man can eat. Air ye hongry?"

"I'm tolerable hungry," said Marmaduke, who was all things to all men, and dropped naturally into the forms and phraseology of the countryside.

"Air ye too proud for a bait of this?"

"I'm powerful fond of hog's jowl," Marmaduke declared.

"Then set over here and eat," said Joe.

"Well, I don't care if I do," said Marmaduke.

"I was settin' a-studyin'," said Joe, as he served his guest a Homeric portion, "I was settin' a-studyin' about you boys and wonderin' how you was gittin' on with your so'jerin' this cold weather, considerin' how you had always lived delicate and warm, and was raised on fine vittles, up thar at the Bent. And then, by Jacks, the fust thing I knowed, I hear'd ye holler! I waited till ye hollered ag'in before I believed my years. I reckon hit hain't no use to ax ye whar ye come from, ner what ye come fer, is it?"

"I'd as leave tell you as not," said Marmaduke. "I've come to take Spanishburg."

"Not individjilly," said Joe, poising a great fat morsel on his knife, and opening his eyes wide as his jaws closed upon it, "not individjilly by yourself, ye hain't?"

"That depends," said Marmaduke. "Who is in command in Spanishburg?"

"Bigstaff," said Joe. "Colonel Barney Bigstaff. He's got a raft of squirrel-hunters from over in Sevier county."

"That's bad," said Marmaduke, and for a time there was no more talk.

"He's a red-headed young feller," said Joe, presently, wiping his big moustache with the back of his hand.

"That's bad, too," said Marmaduke, cleaning up his plate.

"Have some more meat," said Joe.

"No, I thank ye, I wouldn't choose any," said Marmaduke.

"Well," said Joe, "hit lacks two good hours tell daylight, and you'd better turn in now and git some sleep."

Marmaduke clapped his host upon the shoulder. "You are a man after my own heart, Joe, and I love you like a brother."

"What do ye want me to do now?" asked Joe, dryly.

"Nothing," said Marmaduke, "except to promise me you'll never join the army — any army!"

"Don't be oneasy," said Joe. "I never could make out to git mad about a passel of niggers, one way or another, and I never fight till I git mad. Lie down here and I'll kiver ye up good and warm with these quilts and sheepskins."

It was approaching daylight when Colonel

Marmaduke, trusting the care of Diablo to Joe, left the cabin and made his way along the creek to Eagle Bend. The great oaks were shivering in the morning wind as he came up to the house. He had his key, and let himself in; he was happy and contented as he sniffed the familiar half-musty smell of the big hall, and felt with experienced precision for the newelpost of the stairway in the dark. The household was deep in slumber; he heard a sound of snoring as he crept upstairs. His room was cold; the chimney soot had powdered down thickly on the wood and kindling laid in the fireplace. He set a match to it. Nothing in his room seemed disturbed — not even an old pipe of Romilly's, which his friend had laid on the mantelshelf the last time he was in the house. He sat warming himself by the fagots till the light of day came in. He then went to the window, and looked at Diana's house; its chimneys were already smoking in the cold dawn. Beyond it the day arose with ominous redness over the mountains.

It was not the only ominous thing he saw. Halfway between the house and the turnpike was a smart detail of soldiers with an officer on horseback. With his fieldglass he could see not only the color of their clothes, which was blue, but even the color of the officer's hair, which was red.

CHAPTER XII

IN DIANA'S HOUSE

THERE was only one thing to do, which was to run, and Marmaduke ran — out of the house and through the wood down the lane to the creek. The wind was sharp, the skies were like lead, and the ground was frozen hard as old mortar. From tree to tree the ruffled bluejays ran screaming before him.

He did not check his pace till he gained the cover of the sycamores by the water gap. There, upon the foot log, he came suddenly face to face with Diana Fortune.

She wore a gray burnoose with a hood; in her hand she carried an empty sack; her cheeks were stung swiftly crimson. She stepped back, startled, doubting; then her eyes lighted up. "Oh, you!" she cried. Then she ran to him, calling his name, and crying out breathlessly, how glad she was, and how strange it was, and other eager things, all in the flush of happy surprise.

"I may as well tell you," he explained — he wondered, all the while, why he should be trembling so — he knew that he was not frightened — "that I was running when I saw you. These people have

found out I am here. In fact, it's a tight box. But how good it is to see you!"

"You mean — you may be captured?"

"Oh, I have some chances yet," he laughed. "That was why I was running."

"But where are your men — *your* soldiers?"

"I came alone," he said. "My troops are many miles away. I came," he added, with an effort, for it seemed very difficult to say it — "I came to see — you!"

She did not appear to hear it. "You must not be captured!" she cried.

"I could make a good dash for liberty if I had a horse that could run," he said, putting a fresh cap on his revolver. "Have you got one in your stable?"

"Mother has just started with the horse and buggy to town," she said. "But why not hide in my house?"

"Hide? In your house? Is your father there?"

"No, he is in Richmond. There is no one but old Jane, who stays in the kitchen."

"The house will be searched."

"I think not. You know," she added, "we — that is, mother is on good terms with the soldiers, especially since father went away. We have some of the officers at the house — as company — sometimes."

"I don't like to drag you into this matter," he

said, doubtfully; he was gazing with helpless fascination into her flushed and eager face.

"Drag me in?" she cried, laughing. "Why, what do I care for that? Why should I mind? Didn't we say we were to be friends?"

He hesitated. "Where were you going?"

"To your house, for salt."

"Then go and get the salt, and find out all you can. None of my people know I am here. I will go to your house."

"Go into the sitting-room; the front door is unlocked. "I'll come back as soon as I can."

He caught her hand. "Good-by — if I don't see you again!" he cried. Then he turned and ran swiftly up the hill to the house.

There were soldiers in the highway — he caught a fleeting glimpse of them as he dashed breathless into the house; but from the sitting-room the turnpike was not visible. He had a feeling that he had been seen.

The windows gave a view of the greater part of the Marmaduke plantation — a vista of fields and far-stretching woodlands, bounded by curving ridges and bits of river. The landscape presented chiefly neutral tints — the gray of woods, the drab of corn stubble, the faded auburn of broomsedge. These low tones were relieved here and there by groups of cedar and belts of oak and pine, and by the solid red of the farmhouse, from whose chimneys the

bright blue wood smoke was rising. Marmaduke saw with his fieldglass other touches of blue. These were contributed by the uniforms and overcoats of the soldiers as they went about among the fields and in and out of the buildings.

Presently he made out the figure of Diana Fortune as she emerged from the trees by the foot log and came up the hill. She entered the house flushed and animated.

"I talked with one of the men over there," she said, and stopped to take breath; her lips were burning red, and the cold had drawn a rich color into her cheeks. "It seems they are not at all sure of your being here. And if something isn't developed by noon, the men will be withdrawn."

She sat down and turned her eyes wonderfully upon him. "Oh, I'm so glad to see you!" she cried, with happy irrelevance.

There came from somewhere in the house the voice of old Jane, calling her young mistress. Diana ran out to her.

When she returned her face was very serious.

"They are coming into the yard from the road," she said, "and they have started to search the barn. Bigstaff is with them."

"They will search the house next," said Marmaduke.

"Barney Bigstaff has eaten at my table. I won't have him search my house!"

"I'm afraid they've got me, this time," said Marmaduke. "A sorry wind-up for a soldier — to be cornered hiding in a woman's house!" He strode to the window. What he saw there made him turn quickly, his face hard and set. "Good-by!"

"You're not going out there!"

He was already at the door, his pistol in his hand.

"There's a horse standing there — I'll make a run for it — you don't understand — to be caught *this* way — I can't — by God, I will not!"

"Wait! Don't!" she cried. "They will kill you — I know they will kill you! You don't know how they hate you! Stop! I will hide you, in my room — upstairs! I will not let them search the house — I can prevent it — I swear I can!"

She pulled his hand away from the knob, and stood between him and the door.

"Now come with me," she said, imperiously, looking steadily in his face.

He obeyed, mechanically. By the time they had reached her room there was heard a loud knocking at the door below.

"Diana," said he, "I will not be taken by these people. I will shoot the first man who comes up here."

"No." She touched his shoulder lightly with her fingers. She was very pale and very quiet. "They will not come up here. Trust me to manage them. But if I fail, it is better for you to be cap-

tured than that. Haven't you," she asked — she could not now look at his eyes, which were blazing like those of some fierce animal suddenly trapped — "haven't you everything to live for?"

She shut the door in his face.

As she went down some one threw open the hall door. The porch was covered with infantrymen. Standing in the doorway was a short, red-haired, heavy-set young man, who carried his head high and did not seem to need the eagles in his shoulderstraps to indicate that he was somebody in particular. He touched his hat; he did not remove it; that was never Colonel Bigstaff's way.

"Good-morning," said he.

Diana stood on the lowest step of the stair, her hand upon the newel-post, her eyes resting upon the visitor with apparent coolness. But her heart seemed to be leaping in her throat, and she drew several deep breaths before she trusted her voice with speech.

"Tell me, please, what is the meaning of this intrusion?"

He hesitated, and catching her breath Diana went on tauntingly: "Now that the Confederates are coming, do you go about with a bodyguard?"

"We have come to search the premises," said he, advancing.

"The premises? You? And for what?"

"For the person of Colonel Henry Marmaduke,

of the Confederate States Army," he declared, a little pompously.

"Colonel Marmaduke? What reason have you to suppose that any such person is in my house?" she cried, angrily. "Haven't you wit enough to know that this is the last place in the world any person of that name would come to?"

Several of the men on the porch snickered, covertly. They were loyal to their young Colonel, but the last man in that gaping, taciturn, observant crowd knew him to be vain and self-important. It was as good as a play to them to listen.

He reddened, but carried it off with some grace. "That's all right; I know all about that," he said. "Lieutenant, see that no one leaves the house," and he shut the door upon the soldiers. A subdued guffaw sounded from without.

"Why did you want to make fun of me before the men?" he demanded, when alone with Diana.

"Because you deserved it, Barney," she said. "Why do you want to bring all those creatures into my house, with their muddy feet? What have I ever done to you, to deserve such treatment?"

She turned from him and walked into the sitting-room. He followed.

"Now listen to me," he said. "Last night two scouts trailed Henry Marmaduke almost to Spanishburg, but lost the trail near Eagle Bend. One of them declares he knows Marmaduke and seen him

plain, in the light of a picket fire; he said at first he thought it wasn't Marmaduke but his ghost. The scouts came right on to me, I got my men out, and one of them says he saw a man answering to Marmaduke's description running up here from the creek. Now, I know there used to be little friendship between you people and the Marmadukes, but all the same, he's a rebel, and *you* are a rebel. I needn't say any more. — Where is your mother?"

"She has gone to town," said Diana stiffly.

Colonel Bigstaff took a turn or two about the room. "Well, we've got to search the house."

"You will search my house — you will turn your dirty, thieving, tobacco-spitting ruffians into my rooms, to rummage and pilfer — you, Colonel Bigstaff, who have been coming to see me and calling yourself my friend, and offering to do all in your power to protect us from the plundering of this horde of Goths and Vandals you are supposed to command? Well, sir, you can do so; it is in your power. But let me say to you plainly, that if you do, I shall never speak to you again."

"Oh, hold on!" he protested. "It ain't so bad as that. These men are all right, and I will be with them to see that they do no damage."

"Very well." She turned from him, with a defiant sweep of her skirts. "Pillage the home of a defenseless woman, if you will. You shall at least hear my opinion of a coward." She stood before

him fairly glowing with simulated scorn. "Oh, I see you are only what your forbears were, for generations!" she taunted. "Trash! White trash! And I thought — I thought you were a gentleman!"

The thrust went home to his tenderest spot.

"You hain't any right to say I am not a gentleman!" he declared, reverting to the speech of his boyhood. "I've always done right by you and always will."

"Yes, you always have," she said, quite gently, happily inspired now to cease firing. "I would love to have you be my — my friend."

"I'll take away my men at once," he said, "if you will give me your word Marmaduke is not here."

She was not unprepared for this. Her hatred of lies and liars was lifelong and fervent, but she had already made up her mind to lie, if need be. Being unused to it, she colored a little, but she looked in the man's face fearlessly. He sat down beside her, tapping his boot with his scabbard.

"You might have asked me that before," she said with an air of great reasonableness. "He is not here."

Then it occurred to her that since she must lie, the lie might as well be comprehensive. "He is not here, nor on the place, nor has he been here."

"On your word?"

"On my word."

He nodded. "That saves a heap of trouble, and keeps you and me from falling out, doesn't it?" He started up brusquely. "I've got to go. Tell me when I can come to see you? I wanted to talk to you last night, but I had no chance."

"Just any time," she said.

"I am coming right soon, then. I've got something to say to you. Good-by."

"Good-by," she said, mechanically. Then she rose, rallying her self-control. "I am glad you chose to be nice, Colonel Renegade," she added brightly.

"I wish you wouldn't call me that," he said.

"Oh, why?"

"Because it ain't fair. It was only the other day I heard you going on about some young fellow who lived here and who joined the Union Army. You didn't call him a renegade."

"That was Captain Romilly," she said, adding, "Oh, he was an old friend of mine."

The young officer passed his fingers through his curling hair. "Well, if you think maybe I ain't your friend — a real friend — at least consider me as a man who believes in you, won't you?"

"I must — I do," she said. "Good-by."

His exit had a dignity perhaps exaggerated in her eyes. She viewed it through a medium in which his sincere and not ungraceful homage lingered as a rather cloying incense. Unfinished conscience

raised a bruised head to complain that she had done a thing that had never been, nor was, nor could be, justified under any circumstances. She gave way to nervous laughter; she bolted the hall door and ran from window to window. The soldiers were moving away; she watched until she saw the last of them disappear from the yard, the capes of their coats flapping in the bleak wind.

Why had she done this thing? What was she to him, or he to her, that she should lie for him?

CHAPTER XIII

THE SCRAPBOOK

"I TOLD him that if he didn't take his soldiers away, I'd never speak to him again, and — and he went," she said to Marmaduke. The sight of him, gratefully safe, rallied her to the thought of him killed or captured, had she not foresworn. Joy over the deed rose like a tempest in her bosom; she gave him a spirited and comical account of the interview with Bigstaff, but she made no mention of the subterfuge that saved the day. Marmaduke had been held for a time in a parlous situation, and was nerved in pride and shame for desperate work, but he was not the kind of man upon whom the shadow of danger rests long after the cloud has passed; he was soon laughing gaily over the humor of her tale.

"I wonder if they will come back?" she asked.

"It is always well to give an enemy credit for doing what he ought to do," said Marmaduke. "Bigstaff knows I can't be very far away. When he fails to find me elsewhere he will naturally come back here, and, friend or no friend, he will overhaul your house."

"Then the best thing is that you should be absent, isn't it?"

"Decidedly. I need a horse — for choice, my own horse."

"There is none to help you but me," she said. "Make me your orderly. Give me your commands."

"I have already put you to great inconvenience."

She was getting into her burnoose. "Won't you let me do all I can for you — and the Cause?" She spoke in a low voice, and awaited his reply with eyes of such loyalty and kindness that he could think of nothing save the one impetuous desire to take this woman in his arms.

"Tell me what I am to do?" she said, impatiently, and the question roused him as from a trance.

"Go to my father and tell him I am here, and, for the present safe. Tell him to send Joram to my friend Joe Dockery's place for my horse, and ride him down to the water-gap, as though to water him, and wait there. If I can get on that horse, I can get away. As soon as Joram starts down the lane to the creek, if the coast seems at all clear, give me a signal from the house." He considered a moment. "Hang a sheet from one of the upper windows. I will watch with my glass. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly, my captain," she said, smiling. "Your commands shall be implicitly obeyed!" And making the right-about-face she marched from the

room. On the stair landing she paused and called back to him; he ran to the door. She stood there drawing the folds of her gray burnoose about her, looking up at him over her shoulder, smiling. "Don't you think you had better wait down in the sitting-room?" she asked, and without stopping for an answer, ran down the steps and out of the house.

The time of waiting seemed long. He threw some wood on the sitting-room fire, put his pistols on the table, and took his position near the window. The sullen gray deepened over the skies, and against a little cedar shivering by the window he noted a few flakes of snow. The wind played a melancholy tune about the house, and a shutter slammed. There was no sign of soldiers anywhere. Far off on the ridges were the vanguards of a heavy snowstorm.

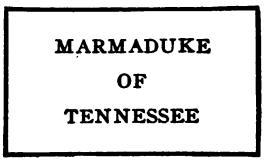
The irresolute shutter kept banging at intervals like a shot in the distance. The snow came heavier, on a driving, swirling blast. The wind piped so keenly that more than once he thought he heard a far-off buglecall. He became apprehensive for Diana; if she were out in that bitter weather she would be chilled to the bone.

The woods grew slowly grayer, the fields were turning white.

Impatiently he fell to striding up and down the sitting-room, glancing through the window toward Eagle Bend to see if she had displayed the signal. In his pacing back and forth he came repeatedly face

to face with the book-case. These were Diana's own books, he knew; he looked upon them with much curiosity and no little reverence — for arbitrarily, he had formed a high opinion of her intellect and scholarship.

Presently he became aware that among the labels there stood forth, as in letters of fire, his own name:



It was pasted on the back of a large volume, which he picked up in amazement, and in a merely human sense it was impossible to keep from looking into it. It proved to be a scrapbook, made up of press clippings and woodcuts. The clippings all related to his own exploits; they were culled from North and South, and as he read — which he did voraciously — he saw himself in strange lights: by the papers of both sections he was pitched upon as a picturesque and virile figure, posing in the Southern journals as a plumed cavalier, charging with drawn saber at the head of perfectly formed and faultlessly attired cavalry, heavily massed — all bearded gentlemen, wearing handsome braided jackets and mounted upon shapely Arabian horses. In the Union

papers he appeared as an unkempt ruffian with enormous moustaches, who rode with his followers madly over women and children, spearing pigs and sheep, with the smoke of burning homes and wagon trains marking his trail through an unhappy country. There were even cuts and clippings from English papers — how had Diana garnered these? Great as was his interest in the literature itself (he had not had a chance to see the papers, and it was heady reading for the young man), this was overshadowed by the knowledge that the book was hers — that she had thought so much, or at least so often, of him, patiently gleaning news and opinion far and wide — news and opinion of him!

In his absorption he forgot to watch for her signal. The rattling of the shutters from a sudden accession of fury in the storm roused him. He sprang up, put away the book, and ran to the window. So heavy was the falling snow that the outlines of the house at Eagle Bend were dimmed, but her signal was plain to be seen. A sudden flush of gladness came over him. "God bless her loyal heart!" he cried aloud. And turning eagerly to go, he faced a blue-clad soldier in the doorway.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MAN FROM THE MOUNTAINS

HE WAS spattered with snow; there was snow in his red hair, and he held out two pistols. "Stick up your hands," he said; he spoke with a breathless effort at self-control.

Marmaduke threw out his palms expressively. "My pistols are there," he said, pointing to the table.

"I am the commanding officer here," said his captor. "My name is Bigstaff — Colonel Bigstaff, U. S. Volunteers. I reckon you are Colonel Marmaduke." He paused. Marmaduke waited in silence. "I've heard a right smart about you, Colonel, but if this is the way you do your campaigning, I be danged if I see how you made your reputation."

"I didn't make it sneaking into people's houses," said Marmaduke, unguardedly; he was sick with mortification.

"No," said the mountaineer, drily, "that's the way you lose it."

The thrust was sharp enough. Marmaduke laughed, and though his face was still flushed he recovered his good-nature at once.

"My loss is your gain, I suppose, Colonel," he said, pleasantly. "They say it 's an ill-wind that blows nobody good."

Bigstaff made no remark, and Marmaduke presently spoke again: "May I sit down?"

The other nodded, and Marmaduke, seating himself at ease in a chair, fixed his captor with a considering eye. His lower lip was protruded in sullen and painful hostility, but in spite of this and in spite of his hair, which seemed excessive both in quantity and color, Colonel Barney Bigstaff had undeniable good looks. He had full and speaking eyes, with the large and supple lips of the native orator. Marmaduke wondered if it was because he was a mountaineer, with a mountaineer's large and primitive ideas of propriety, that he strolled so casually into a lady's sitting-room. Or was it — ?

His mouth became dry, and the room grew close. *Had* she betrayed him? — she, the mistress of his dreams? Was this man her lover? He passed his hand over his eyes, he moistened his lips, and sat for a wretched minute miserably sick at heart, and then, as suddenly as it came, the doubt was gone, and he saw Diana as she had stood upon the landing demurely holding the folds of her cloak about her and smiling up at him over her shoulder. That memory was enough. He turned upon the sullen young man with a civil inquiry.

"What is your plan, Colonel?"

"When this storm slacks," said Bigstaff, "you'll see the inside of Spanishburg jail."

"And some breakfast, too, I hope! You know," declared Marmaduke, expansively, "I have a dim sense of having eaten, some time recently, a dish of hog's jowl, which was very well as far as it went, but you have no idea how lightly it sits upon my constitution!"

Bigstaff had nothing to say, and Marmaduke narrowed his eyes suddenly upon a discovery. This man's savage manner was not mere boorish incivility; he was angry with an anger which Marmaduke's effort to talk inflamed. Now, to be angry is not an ideal frame of mind for one who stands guard.

"Would it be inquiring too much," said Marmaduke, "to ask what you are so mad about?"

Bigstaff leaned with his back against a table, keeping Marmaduke closely covered with both revolvers, but he made no reply.

The fire burned down, the coals died out, the room grew chill.

Outside, the bitter and beautiful storm drove white upon the windows.

"A little wood on the fire wouldn't hurt," said Marmaduke.

"If you move hand or foot," said Bigstaff, "I'll kill you."

"Then I shall not move," said Marmaduke, turning his eyes gravely upon his adversary. "But

would you care to say, if I am not too inquisitive, just how you happened to break in on me here, anyway?"

"What business is it of yours?" cried Bigstaff.

"I was just wondering," said Marmaduke.

"I come here to see Diana," said Colonel Bigstaff.

"Is that possible!" cried Marmaduke.

"Why shouldn't it be possible?" the young officer demanded. "Hain't I good enough to? Is there anything surprising about that?"

"Why, no," said Marmaduke. "Not at all, I assure you."

Bigstaff cleared his throat. "You think she's an angel, I reckon?"

"Of whom do you speak?"

"Diana Fortune." (The Colonel called it Dianer.)

"I decline to discuss the lady."

"Well, I'll tell you what I think about her. I think she is the smartest and the most accomplished woman I ever have seen. You don't object to that, do you?"

"On the contrary," said Marmaduke, "it does you credit."

"I 'low'd you'd bear me out," said Bigstaff. "And yet — notwithstanding — notwithstanding, mind you — I think she is as common, by God, as the dirt in the road."

"Common?" said Marmaduke.

"Why, common as hell," said Bigstaff.

There fell a little space of silence. It resembled the pause when the fire in the fuse has neared but not touched the powder. To Marmaduke, Diana had somewhat of a cloud about her, he did not see her clearly. But he did see that she was being coarsely maligned. And she was a woman, and he loved her. Suddenly, with all his great power concentrated in one crashing spring, he leaped upon the man and smashed him to the floor. Both revolvers were discharged, but there was no struggle. The thing was over like a thunder-blast: Bigstaff, whose head had struck the floor, lay stunned and motionless, and Marmaduke rose, catching up the pistols.

As he did so, a numbness and tingling in his elbow gave him news that he was shot. He got off his coat; the wound bled viciously, and it was no easy thing, working with fingers and teeth, to get a handkerchief bound tightly around and above the injured place. He felt a passing faintness when he had done; and he sat down to rest, with a pistol in his hand. Bigstaff had come to, and was sitting up.

"Just keep that position," said Marmaduke. "And don't speak."

Instead of obeying, Bigstaff sprang to his feet, for steps were heard in the hall. "My men are coming!" he cried. "*Here, men, this way!* — I advise you to put up that pistol — they'll *kill* you."

Very quietly the door was pushed open, and filling the doorway appeared the bulky, snow-covered figure and great red face of Colonel Dick Upshaw, who lounged nonchalantly against the jamb. In one big hairy hand he carried a short carbine, and with the other he twisted his ragged moustache.

"Well, by ganney, we're here," said he.

CHAPTER XV

THE FIGHT IN SPANISHBURG

THE whole command was in the field. They had heard Marmaduke was taken, and their anger was not soothed by the snow and the snarling winds. Cold and hungry they came down the frozen turnpike with a roar of hoofs which the thin snow could not muffle. The few outposts had been swept into their net and the column clamored to go up against the town. "We heard you had been captured," said Lockspur, who followed upon Upshaw's heels, "and so we came to get you or burn up the whole dashed town!"

Officers and men came crowding eagerly, all talking at once. "We seen you ride right into the Fid'ril colyum," said Micajah Lea. "By gad, we didn't know what to think!" said Lockspur. "We thought we'd better hit the grit, anyway," said Upshaw.

"We seen you ride right into the Fid'ril colyum," repeated Micajah Lea.

"Colonel, how did you ever get through?" cried Lockspur.

"How did *you* get through?" demanded Marmaduke.

"We didn't get through," said Upshaw. "We swung around the rear, and had a brush with some cavalry."

"And did you know that I had come on to Spanishburg?"

"We didn't know it," said Lockspur. "We thought maybe you had."

"We hoped you had," said Upshaw.

"We jist *suspicioned* it," said old Micajah, upon which everybody laughed.

"Just outside here," said Upshaw, "scouts came back and reported that you were inside the Union lines — probably a prisoner. They got the word at Eagle Bend."

All now talked at once.

"The men haven't had any breakfast — "

"For the Lord's sake, tell us where to head in — "

"That's blood on your coat — you're wounded, Colonel — "

"Who's your friend, Colonel? Introduce us!"

"Let's see that arm!"

"Who did that?"

Marmaduke raised a hand for silence.

"This is Colonel Bigstaff, the gallant officer in command here; I had the honor to take him prisoner. We'll have other quarters by and by; meanwhile let him be taken good care of here, Colonel Upshaw, with a detail of two men. — Blood? Oh, that's

nothing, it comes from a slight flesh wound — it's nothing, Doctor. I assure you, it is of no consequence. Now, then," cried he, buckling on his pistols, " who will take breakfast with me in Spanishburg?"

"I!" — "I!" — "I!" — The sabers clanged and the place rang with cheers. In two minutes the house was cleared of the cavalry, except two disappointed soldiers detailed to stand guard over Colonel Bigstaff. When the men of his command saw Marmaduke they broke into wild jubilation; a hundred men or more, seeing him afoot, jumped down to offer him a mount. He took the nearest, and with cheers the column moved forward swiftly along the turnpike in the whirling snow, driving the pickets before them.

" I think they will surrender," said Lockspur, " when they know Bigstaff is caught."

" They are mountaineers," said Marmaduke. " Did anybody ever tell you mountaineers would not fight?" He swept the place with his glasses. " They are going into their houses, and that means dirty work."

Colonel Upshaw pulled his frosty moustache. " I wonder if there's any good smoking tobacco in them stores?" he asked.

" I don't know, Dick," said Marmaduke, genially. " Let's go and see."

The men were now dismounted, and leaving a

fourth of their number for the care of the horses, they went in very eagerly, raising their piercing yell.

They met no opposition till the column was half way through the town, Marmaduke riding at its head. Suddenly a fire broke upon them from the houses, a fusilade from ambush, mortally vicious. The musketry became general along the line.

"Break in the doors!" shouted Marmaduke. "Fire the houses!"

The little orderlies galloped fearlessly along the deadly streets.

"Colonel's compliments, and says bust down the doors and burn the houses!"

The troopers swarmed at the buildings, battering with boots and guns; there was elemental fighting in halls and stairways, parlors, bedrooms and shops. Marmaduke ordered up the Bull-Pups, a battery of small mountain howitzers which the men had captured and carried with them everywhere. These were turned on the houses and gaps made in the walls. Several buildings began belching flames. There was no time to feel sorry for the owners, though they were old friends. White flags — tablecloths and bedsheets — were hung from various houses.

Upon this Marmaduke stopped the firing. The streets were blue with smoke; it was still snowing a little, and bitterly cold.

Very soon it became plain that only those in the houses which had shown white flags meant to surrender. A thrill of black fury ran through the soldiers in the streets.

"Double-shot the guns and aim below the sills," Marmaduke called out to the gunners. He moved quietly about the work, like a deliberate street foreman bossing a gang. The infuriate men swept into the houses and fought with pistols, and clubbed muskets, and burning timbers, and their hands. Often there was no question of quarter asked or given. The fight went on stubbornly for hours; it was noon before the Marmaduke cavalry had full possession of the place.

But long before the fighting was over the women of Spanishburg came out, and unmindful of the blind bullets, waited on the fallen of both armies in the streets.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TOURNIQUET

MARMADUKE was very busy for hours putting out fires and paroling prisoners; late in the afternoon he went down to inspect the hospital. The streets smelled of powder smoke and burning wood. It snowed fitfully, with now and then a brilliant gleam of sun. Soldiers, mounted and afoot, were coming and going, and the sidewalks were congested with aimless civilians. Everyone seemed bent on getting somewhere else and then getting back again. Stalwart cavalrymen were carousing at the bars or stuffing themselves with fried chicken and biscuits as they walked in the streets. It was curious to see how gaily life went on, and how much merriment there could be, when there were so many wounded and dead.

The hospital was an old warehouse divided into a number of rooms; in front were wounded men waiting their turn at the hands of the surgeons. Some were sitting, some walking and moaning with injuries more painful than dangerous; some were stretched on blankets, white, faintly restless, mortally hurt; some were talking excitedly about the fight. The air was filled with the odors of coffee, whiskey, damp clothing, and medicines.

Marmaduke went casually among them, with a word for each, touching them, praising them. Their skins were blanched under the grime of powder smoke and weather tan, and their thick-muscled arms and hairy chests were cold and clammy from the shock of injury. Most of the faces lighted up at sight of the commander, but it was strange to see how variously each man took his dole of pain and misfortune. One man was shot in the foot and rolled his eyes to all comers, making insistent demands, and oblivious of all suffering but his own. A black-eyed lad, who repeatedly gave up his turn, was telling with a good deal of laughter, how fortunate it was he had lost his right arm, since he was left-handed. Another with numerous wounds, blanched and calm, contentedly waiting to die, quietly asked the news of the hour. From a room with a thin partition wall came the voice of a patient sputtering and swearing rapidly in a sing-song voice as he took the anaesthetic; thence came also the sound of a saw, the sick-sweet smell of chloroform, and the plumping thud of a severed limb as it struck the floor.

By a pallet in a corner sat Diana Fortune. She had come into town with Lorena in the Eagle Bend carriage as soon as the sound of firing died away. Mrs. Fortune had returned with Lorena in the carriage, leaving her horse and phaeton for Diana, who had stayed, determined to be of service. She

had applied to Dr. Lockspur for work in the hospital.

"Nursing? No, by gad!" said the surgeon, with medical freedom of speech. "An amateur nurse is a good thing, but in an emergency hospital she is sometimes an embarrassment. Do you suppose one of these old shell-backs could ask an exquisite creature like you to do things for him? Nursing is nursing, you know — it ain't fanning the brow and reciting poetry. If you really want to help, I'll tell you what to do."

"I do want to help," said Diana.

"Then get us pants," said the Doctor.

"Pants?"

"Pants! All kinds of pants — any kind of pants. No soldier can keep a bold front when his rear has given away in complete disorder; no man can be a hero with his shirt sticking out! Get in your buggy and drive about town, and ask people to give us clothing, and socks, and shoes — reject nothing, accept everything, take all you can get your hands on, and God bless you!"

So Diana had spent a day of furious activity, intoxicated by the spirit of emergency. In the late afternoon she came to the hospital, bedraggled and tired and happy in the sense of achievement. Dr. Lockspur set her to work feeding a stricken soldier with something out of a bottle, a spoonful at a time. She was engaged in this work when Marma-

duke found her. He expressed no surprise at seeing her there, which she mutely appreciated; he drew up a chair and began talking to her quietly; she listened without leaving off her work.

His talk was all of gratitude; he was earnest in his thanks for what she had done for him. How much she had done, however, how far she had carried her impulse to help him, and that she had boldly perjured herself to save him, he was unaware; she kept it secret. And perhaps from modesty or shame in some sort analogous he suppressed the fact that he had faced death to pummel a jealous fool who had reviled her.

He spoke with some physical languor, but his eyes were brilliant with interest; she could not at once fairly meet them. When she did so she saw that he was pale. This led to the discovery that his arm, under the cape of his overcoat, was carried in a clumsy sling.

"No one told me you were hurt!" she cried, resentfully. "Oh, when was it done? How are you hurt? Does it pain you?"

"A bullet touched the flesh of my arm; it is nothing."

She put down the bottle and stood up, looking at him with dark eyes of mistrust.

"Are you sure?"

"Indeed, it is nothing."

"Who dressed it?" she persisted.

"I dressed it myself, I believe. A steward made a sling for it, just for comfort."

Mistrusting still she resumed her ministrations to the injured soldier in silence. Presently, with her back to him, "I think that is like you," she declared. "With the whole medical staff of a brigade at your service, and doctors with stars on their collars to choose, you dress your wound yourself, and ask a steward to make you a sling!"

He laughed softly, deeply pleased. "Truly, it is of no consequence. The only interesting thing about this little hurt is the way I got it."

"Tell me about that," she said, turning to look at him.

"This seems hardly the place," he said, rising. "I wonder if you — if I might come over to see you tonight?"

"I shall be happy to have you come." Wholly against her will she dropped her eyes. "If you are not too tired!" she added, looking up.

"I cannot imagine myself too tired to wish to talk to you," he said, with a grave simplicity that made the speech anything but a gallantry. "May I come at eight?"

"You may come at any time. My work is done here when I have finished with this."

"What are you giving this man?"

"I don't know. He seems to be intoxicated — isn't he?"

Dr. Lockspur, enveloped in a great bloody apron, broke out of the operating room and flung himself wearily into the chair which Marmaduke had vacated. "What do you think of our new anaesthetist, Colonel?"

"Surely," said Marmaduke, anxiously, and he hesitated, glancing at Diana — "you still have — "

"No, sir." Lockspur took the bottle from Diana's hand. "Here, son, drink the balance of this — drink, my boy! You won't? You refuse? Then God bless you and have mercy on you!" The surgeon held up the bottle and regarded it with a smile. "The resource of the incompetent," he observed, and gracefully emptied the flask. "No, sir, not a minim of laudanum, nor a grain of opium, nor a scruple more of chloroform. We fall back upon King Alcohol — he helps some. Ah, well, take him in, men," he added, as two assistants came up with a stretcher. "Put the ropes on and tell 'em to go right ahead. I've got to rest a minute — my back's broke. — I hate a dashed inhuman mess like this," he continued, when the limp soldier was borne away. "It seems so unnecessary. Miss Diana, when anybody asks you about war, just stand up and say, speaking as man to man, that war ain't what it's cracked up to be. I thank you for your services and I suspect you'd better run along."

"Why?"

Lockspur polished his glasses on his apron, fixing

his dark blue eyes solemnly upon her. "Things are going to be unpleasant about here, for awhile."

Her knitted brows framed an inquiry: it was answered by a scream from the improvised operating room — the thrilling shriek of a man in uttermost anguish.

"Ah, why is that? Why do they hurt them?" Diana flung out, imperiously. "What does it mean?"

"I thought you understood," said Lockspur. "We have just used up all our chloroform."

"But why don't you wait until you get more?"

"They would have gangrene, and die."

Diana walked away to a window, turning pale as the screaming continued. Marmaduke followed her with his eyes, but spoke to Lockspur. "I was about to forget a message. Lorena asked me to bring you out to Eagle Bend tonight."

Lockspur rolled his apron into a rope between his knees.

"Is she in town?"

"No, she has gone out."

"I'll be glad to come, when I have finished this chopping. Take Miss Diana away with you, will you? She has been most useful, but she has had about enough of this — and so, by the same token, have you. Let me have a look at that arm."

"Wait till you come out home," said Marmaduke. "Upshaw will be there. We'll have a reunion."

He paused. "We'll miss old Romilly. Did I tell you I saw him?"

"You saw Romilly? Where?" demanded Lockspur.

"No matter — I saw him," said Marmaduke, and he went to Diana.

She stood looking out upon the street, where lamps were being lit, for the sullen afternoon was going.

"How do you expect to get home?"

"My phaeton is waiting outside."

"Would you care to take me in, and drive me home?"

Her face lighted. "Oh, I should be glad to!"

"Are you ready to go, then?"

"Wait till I put on my burnoose."

He helped her on with this, a voluminous and notable garment of gray, made with a hood, and lined with scarlet. It was not snowing, but a keen wind struck their faces as they went out into the street. Diana's phaeton stood by the curb, the horse secured by a strap attached to a hitchweight. When Marmaduke unfastened this and lifted it into the vehicle, it seemed unaccountably heavy, and when he got in beside Diana, he almost fell into the seat.

"Must I drive?" she asked.

"If you please," said he, snuggling into his great coat.

"I can't get over that terrible screaming," Diana

said, as she started the horse. "And nobody seems to care."

"There is no lack of people who care," said Marmaduke. "It is merely the *expression* of caring that you miss, I think. If Lockspur and I kept up the same fine sensibility that you felt in there, we wouldn't last. You have to get used to a thing like that — or give it up."

"I could never get used to it," said Diana, with a shiver. "I went to the hospital because I found myself inclined to run away from it. And I hate to be a coward; it grows on you."

"But you stayed."

"I fainted when I went in."

"Still, you stayed, and Lockspur says you were most useful. I think that is one of the noblest of human experiences, to find yourself able to develop a special strength or capacity where you had reckoned yourself unfit, or pusillanimous. Were you glad to see the cavalry come in?"

"Oh, I cried for joy at the sight of them, the dirty darlings!" She hesitated a moment and went on. "Once I saw a tall ship, my first ship, standing alone out on the skyline on a deep blue sea, its sails towering white and careening a little in the wind with such infinite grace that it clutched my heart; it seemed to me then and afterward I had never seen so fine a thing in all my days. But now I have a new standard; the finest human thing to see isn't a ship

— it's a brigade of cavalry in the charge! A brigade of cavalry," continued Diana, touching up the horse, "wild, devilish, war-stained cavalry — your cavalry — my cavalry — company after company, galloping up the turnpike with terrible shouting in a blinding snowstorm!"

"Indeed it is a fine thing to see," he cried, "but I didn't know you saw any fighting."

"I only saw them going in — it was enough. I watched them from the windows at Eagle Bend, and I knew then that you were safe."

"You have not been home since I saw you there this morning?"

"No."

"Then you didn't know that Colonel Bigstaff was taken there — a prisoner?"

"I heard different stories. Surely he is not there yet?"

"Oh, yes, he is. No prisoner is likely to get away from Micajah Lea, unless the old fellow gets hold of liquor. You remember Micajah Lea?" said Marmaduke, trailing the talk away; he did not feel up to discussing Bigstaff. "We call him Old Thousand-Yards."

"Indeed I know Micajah well. I used to see him rattling homeward on the turnpike, solemnly drunk —"

"Standing up in his wagon," interrupted Marmaduke.

"And swaying and teetering recklessly on the lines, and lashing his team into a mad gallop," said Diana.

"And trailing an intolerable breath of corn whiskey," said Marmaduke, laughing. "That's the man. I have arranged to have him relieved at midnight, and the prisoner taken away."

"You were going to tell me about that affair," she said.

"Tonight — after supper," he said. "Somehow, just now, I am very tired. I was in the saddle all night last night. You talk, will you?"

Diana talked about the battle; occasionally she asked him a question. He answered in monosyllables so often that she presently asked him if he felt very ill.

"I don't feel at all good," said he, and after awhile he added, "In fact — in fact, I feel — I don't know what has come over me."

"I'll have you out home pretty soon," she said, quietly, but in much alarm. She whipped up the horse, and there was no more talk until they neared the gates of Eagle Bend.

"Diana," said he, "I don't understand it — I can't — seem to breathe."

There was a challenge at the gates, and a brand from a picket fire flared in their faces. "Open the gates, quick!" cried Diana. "Go for Dr. Lockspur — any doctor — all of them — gallop — it is

Colonel Marmaduke, and he is desperately sick — he is wounded!"

The oaks snarled above them in the black night as Diana drove up at a gallop. The windows were bright with firelight. "Is there no light? I can't see," said Marmaduke, stumbling on the steps. Judge Marmaduke met them in open-mouthed surprise.

"He is wounded — help me with him, can't you? Don't ask me to explain!" cried Diana. "He is fainting — he must lie down!"

Between them Marmaduke was got to bed in the Judge's room, where a log fire was blazing.

"This is better, I am able to see, now," said Marmaduke. "But I feel so strange, and there is such — such a weight — and why should I faint?"

His eyes were dancing; he rolled restlessly, yawned and sighed, and his face was pale as stone. "Open a window, it is horribly close. Take the clothes off my chest!"

"What is the matter with you, my son?" asked Marse Jubal, sternly.

"I don't know," said Marmaduke. "Get me some whiskey."

The Judge went from the room swiftly, calling his sister. Diana stood by the bed. "The doctor will be here soon," she said. "Could I get you anything?"

He put out his hand and grasped her dress.

"Don't leave me," he gasped, breathing uncertainly. "Something must be done at once. Don't wait — don't wait for Lockspur. Take the bandage off my arm — it's bleeding."

She removed the gauntlet and the sling; the whole side of his body was wet with blood.

"Oh, Henry!" she cried. "Tell me, if you can, tell me just what to do!"

Afterward she had but a confused memory of what she did, but she recalled tearing a piece of the sheet into narrow strips — after wildly hunting for scissors to cut through the hem — and winding them tightly around and around his wounded arm, from which the blood was running in a pulsing stream. The hasty bandage which he himself had applied that morning had become loosened during the afternoon, and in lifting the hitchweight into the buggy the clot was disturbed and the hemorrhage started afresh. A man bleeds to death quickly when the brachial artery is cut, and Marmaduke could barely keep his head long enough to tell Diana how to re-apply the tourniquet. "Tighter!" he said. "And don't leave me!" And he was conscious no more.

The operation took but a few minutes. It was over, and the patient covered up in bed, when Judge Marmaduke came back with the whiskey, and Mrs. Bell and Lorena, who had been interrupted in the midst of a grand toilette, ran into the room.

Dr. Lockspur had set out for Eagle Bend very soon after Marmaduke and Diana left the hospital, and his horse being swift, he was but a little way behind the phaeton when the messenger met him. He came on at a gallop, and arrived in the sick-room upon the heels of the ladies of the house. The surgeon examined the patient briefly.

"He's all right — just fainted from loss of blood — he's all right, I assure you."

Diana drew a deep breath. It seemed to her now that she had taken the matter too tragically, and she felt ashamed. She was embarrassed, too, at being there. Lorena, recovering from her fright, cast a wondering eye on her. Old Jubal glowered upon her with a spurious look of asperity, which merely meant anxiety. Unobserved she slipped from the room and the house, got into her phaeton, and drove home.

CHAPTER XVII

WHAT DIANA HEARD IN THE DARKNESS

MRS. FORTUNE was a large, sweet-faced woman, colorless, good and dull. The effect of her placidity was hardly disturbed by her habitual expression of shallow surprise, spoken without meaning and applied without energy to every occurrence of the day. "How terrible," she would say mildly, when the salt was spilled, when the wind blew hard, when the cow cast her calf, when the cake was sad, when the State of Tennessee seceded. On the day of the Confederate re-occupation of Spanishburg she had gone to town to spend the day with a relative; the fight had raged under the windows, and drew her favorite phrase frequently to her lips. At noon she had returned to her home, where she found some soldiers on duty, guarding a prisoner in the parlor. And this prisoner was the young commander of the garrison, whom for months she had known, not only as a helpful protector of her home and gear, but as her daughter's particular friend!

"Colonel Bigstaff has been in this house, an honored guest, many times," she said to Diana, with unwonted fire. "It is dreadfully humiliating."

"He ain' never been treat' no way like dis," put

in the cook, who brought in Diana's supper. "Layin' in dar on de sofy, wif ole 'Cajah Lea a settin' by wif a gun, lookin' like he dast him to bat one eye."

"Did you take them some supper?"

"Yes, Miss Dinie. He wouldn't tech it. Say'd he fear'd hit was pizened."

"How terrible," said Mrs. Fortune. "I wish you would go in and speak to him, my dear."

In the sitting-room Diana found a bright fire blazing, and there came a sound of snoring from a prostrate figure by the hearth.

"Looks like we hain't goin' to git relieved," said Micajah, "so me and him agreed to take turns a g'yarding."

"How soundly he sleeps!" said Diana.

Micajah spat in the fire and stroked his tawny beard. "Ef you was to put in two days and a night in the saddle, and then git a chanst to lay down good and warm, I 'low you'd sleep sound, too, mom."

"Is *he* asleep?" She pointed to the figure on the couch.

"Him? Lord, yes. He worrited himself to sleep. I never seed a man take on so, and he cussed and swore tolerable free fer to be so young. Ra'ly, he hain't nothin' but a boy."

The fire flickered and flared, and its light fell on Bigstaff's face. The youthfulness in the smooth,

rounded features was marked in his sleep, for in his waking hours the young officer carried himself in a way that comported less oddly with his position and rank than with his years. He was, indeed, but a boy — and oh, how badly she had treated him! The betrayal of his confidence came back with a sharp sting. That morning she had suffered to think of Henry Marmaduke in captivity — an insupportable thought — but now the pendulum swung the other way, and she could not bear to think of this poor lad, who had been gallant and good to her, starving in a stockade. They had walked, talked, and sung together; he was good company. And she knew that under a bantering, bluff surface of mere friendliness and honest youthful egotism, he had deep respect and admiration for her — and more besides.

She sighed deeply, and turned to Micajah, the old scout. His iron face, with its beaked nose, long beard, and slanting eagle eyes, bloodshot with weariness, yet keen, watchful and merciless, was turned curiously to hers.

"Did you have enough supper?" she asked.

"Me? Plenty, mom, I thank ye."

"You need sleep, too, don't you?"

"Perished fer it, mom!" he answered promptly. "I'll tell ye." He signaled for a private word, and whispered the true toper's confidential appeal. "Ef I hed jist a jigger —" he measured the quantity on his callous finger — "jist a snifter, ye understand,

why I could set up all night in this here place with this here prisoner of war as peert as a owl!"

Diana shook her head.

"Lord, I'll never tell it!" he whispered.

She wandered from the room as one in a dream; something slipped into her mind. So a serpent might slip into a garden.

Micajah's eyes brightened when, as she returned, he saw that she carried a small glass in her hand. It was filled with noxious apple brandy, an article used in that household for the flavoring of pudding sauce. To him it was an ancient friend and familiar, and he drank it at a gulp. His eyes brightened still more when he perceived that she carried under her arm the bottle from which it had been drawn. This she set down presently, to put some wood on the fire. In going, she took the glass from his hand, but — so quickly do we grow expert in such things — she forgot, it seemed, the flask of brandy on the mantle-piece.

And it was so easy to do!

She went to her mother's room and sat by the fire. She felt quite calm, and it was with surprise she noticed that her hands were trembling. She laughed at this discovery, and the mirthful sound roused her mother, who was dozing in her chair; she saw mischief dancing in her daughter's eyes as she stirred the coals with a poker.

"But what will he think of me?" thought the

girl, and the laughter fled. "I don't care, I don't care!" she cried aloud.

"Care for what, my dear?"

"For anything."

"How terrible." Mrs. Fortune chirped her one note sleepily, like a half-awakened bird.

Diana persuaded her to bed. Left alone, the girl lay in a rocking chair, her well-worn little boots stretched out upon the fender. She had seen something of the seamy side of war that day, and her heart had been pierced with pity; she had been placed in trying situations, and her spirits had suffered no eclipse. She was living palpitantly in the thick of events, in the turn of which she was herself no small factor. She felt an indefinable exultation — the young heart glorying in the exercise of power. Had she not lied for Marmaduke that day, he would have been captured or killed. Thus much was positive. She knew that a large number of Bigstaff's men had escaped. It was almost certain that Bigstaff would have been among them, and that they would not have neglected so important a prisoner as Colonel Marmaduke. More than this, without Marmaduke to lead his men, the fight against the garrisoned town might not have gone so well — and so on.

An hour passed in these whirling speculations, and then she became interested in the outcome of her last venture. Did the house beams groan with the

cold, she fancied it the hall stairway creaking under a tip-toeing foot. Did the slats of the shutters click in a puff of wind, it was the cocking of a pistol. The scraping of the boughs outside the window simulated the scuffling of feet. She listened and waited, thinking, thinking.

Time passed. In the deeper hours her equanimity broke up and fled. The stillness, the cold night, and the long suspense wore upon her, she became a prey to wild imaginings. An unexpected snuff of wind down the chimney blew the smoke in her face, and her heart went throbbing in her throat. Was that the wind about the eaves, or was it the lonely grieving of a bugle? She peered out of window; she could make out nothing but a far-off wink of picket fires. At Eagle Bend there were lights, and Marmaduke's pallid face and blanched lips came suddenly before her eyes, and stayed there. Was it well with him? Had she not been too easily reassured? But the doctor had said that it was nothing to get frightened about — and did he not know? And yet — there, would it not leave her? The feeling grew stronger, a wild affright, a dismaying terror; she became completely taken with the feeling that he was at the point of death. And she had left him when he most wanted her — she felt again his clutch on her dress, when he begged her not to leave him. The belief had come with an acute instantaneity — an intimation born of the bleak, black

night, and her own overstrung nerves: it was not a message — Heaven forfend her from such superstition!

She put on her faithful burnoose, and lighted a lantern, and roused up the servant, whom she bade stay with her mother till she returned. "If she wakes, tell her I've gone over to Judge Marmaduke's; if anybody comes to see those soldiers in the parlor, show them where they are, and if any questions are asked, say you don't know."

"Sho'ly, Miss Di, you ain't gwine out in dis cole black night all by yo'self! Don't, honey, wait —"

The door was shut in her face, and Diana, her heart in a tumult of desperation, was gone in the night. It was an hour of utter blackness; the icy wind smote her mouth, and she could hear it angrily tearing its way through the woods. She walked swiftly, almost running, the light snow crisping under her heel. The wind bleared her eyes so that she could hardly see, and she was almost upon them before she discovered that there were some vedettes, with a fire, near the stone bridge. Her approaching light brought out a sharp challenge. Her voice quivered bell-like on the wind. "All right — don't shoot!" And she bore bravely down upon them. She was not afraid they would harm her; indeed she was never afraid of men; she only feared they would make her turn back.

And this, in fact, they did. The posts had been

relieved since dark, and these were not the men who were on duty when she drove Marmaduke home. They did not know who she was nor care; explanations and entreaties went against deaf ears; orders were orders in the Marmaduke cavalry, and in the end she was courteously escorted to her home by one of the vedettes, who politely advised her to stay there.

She did not even take off her burnoose. "I wonder if they think there's no other way to get across that creek!" The retreating steps of the soldier had hardly died away before she was out in the night again. This time it was by the "nigh-cut," and she carried no lantern. Every part of the declivitous pathway was familiar to her, and she went by feeling — she knew where to find this boulder or that tree, and so step by step she made her way, for in the pitch dark her eyes served her no better than if she were blind. The air was still in the deep timber, but she could hear the wind in the tree tops, and as she advanced further she could feel and smell the dampness of the cold creek, and distinguish its spirtle from the noise in the boughs overhead.

It is nothing to be afraid, she kept saying, valiantly, so long as you don't give way to it. But her breath seemed to leave her body and she dropped upon the ground with the weakness of unimaginable terror when she became aware that someone was running after her. The vedette! Instinctively she

slipped out of the path — whereupon a fallen limb cracked sharply under her foot. At this the foot-falls ceased abruptly. A minute or two passed — it might have been five — and she heard the sound again, but stealthier. It came quite close to her, and ceased again; she heard, as she crouched in a rigor of fear, the person's heavy, rapid breathing, and the unmistakable click of a fire-arm, a rifle or revolver. She even fancied she could see him, leaning heavily against a tree, and staring with wide unseeing eyes, as she was staring, against the almost impermeable curtain of blackness.

Then he went on. A faint noise now and then marked his progress — first up the creek, then down, then up again, less cautiously each time, till his movements became a careless flounder, resulting in a crash of branches and a loud splash. This was followed by more crackling, and finally the sounds died away.

And then the truth flashed upon Diana. This was no one pursuing her; it was somebody seeking the foot-log and missing it; it was a fugitive — it was Bigstaff!

She got up and went on. Fear did its worst with her, and left her. Trembling, but in a kind of reaction from her affright, she felt her way to the foot-log, and crawled along it to the other side.

As she came out of the thicket by the creek, the house at Eagle Bend rose before her on the windy

hill, blazing through the trees with lights from every window; at sight of it she stopped irresolute. Fear of the wild night was wholly gone; she felt at home now in these depths of blackness; but as she stared at the house a cold doubt came upon her, a shivering trepidation, checking the warm impulse which had brought her thus far. The house stood high among the great trees, and she remembered how she had seen it at night before from below the hill — the eyrie of the Marmadukes. What would they think of her, coming alone in this bold way — and near midnight? She decided at once that to go to that house was impossible, and yet her feet would not pause; she climbed the hill and passed up under the roaring and hissing trees, whose clamor seemed high in the sky. She moved now without acknowledged object, without decision. Yet, insensibly, her feet were guided up the steps to the porch; her breath came short, and when she sank upon a seat which came in her way, the sense of being where she was, and liable to discovery, brought a sudden dismay. She was on the point of swift flight when the door opened, and a man came out. As he turned on the threshold to speak to someone behind him, a candle held by the other person lit up his face, and Diana recognized the rugged red features and sandy moustache of Colonel Upshaw.

"If you think he's out of danger — "

"I *don't* think so — I haven't said so. His pulse

is around 180. You can't count it for more than five seconds at a time."

"Is that a bad pulse?"

"It 's an exceedingly damned bad pulse."

"Lockspur, I don't want to leave here if you think he isn't going to make it. Is he really in bad shape?"

"Why, I think he's bad off, Dick."

Upshaw put his great hand against the door jamb; with the other he twisted his moustache, and he looked miserably at the floor. "Ain't this hell, Jack?" he said.

"Yes," said Lockspur. "It is. At the same time, why not shut the door?"

"But what do you think, Jack?" It was Lorena's voice.

"Think?"

"Do you believe he will pull through?" demanded Upshaw.

"I don't know why, but I believe he will."

Upon this Upshaw closed the door upon the light; a little later the beat of his horse's hoofs was heard as he plunged away in the dark.

Very silently Diana rose and moved down the steps, down the lane with the great trees soughing above it, passed over the foot-log and toiled up the hill to her home, feeling her way with her hands.

A great change had come upon her. That morning she had been moved to conceal Colonel Marma-

duke from his pursuers for no other reason (as she thought) than because it was something to do; for she was a lonely person who did not like loneliness, she was like a little girl who had to stay at home when all the outside world was brave with glory and adventure. She had taken it upon herself to lie and to commit perjury for this man, and at the same time she denied to herself that it was because of patriotism, or because she cared for him, or because she knew he cared for her, or for any other cause except the love of doing something and having a hand in the game.

Now all her elfish gaiety was gone. The light, wild motives of the morning were but memories, scarcely credible: her attitude to life itself was changed from gay to grave — and yet with what a sweetness! As she felt her way through the friendly darkness there seemed but one important thing in all the world, which was that Henry Marmaduke was not to die.

There were lights at her house, and in the circle of illumination an ambulance was moving off, with mounted soldiers. A horseman galloped up the road; it was Upshaw, whom she had anticipated by coming the nearer way. His deep voice boomed on the night.

"What's the trouble there, Sergeant?"

"Trouble's all over now, sir," was the reply.

"We came out after Colonel Bigstaff, but these drunken fellows have let him get away."

"Gone, is he?"

"Clean gone, sir."

"Where's the guard?"

"In the ambulance, dead drunk."

Colonel Upshaw bent over to get a light from the sergeant's lantern. "Well, take 'em to the guard-house, and lock 'em up," he said pleasantly, and spurred away toward Spanishburg, the sparks flying from his pipe.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE THREE FRIENDS

MARMADUKE was ill for several days, a spectral invalid, with the weather-stain marked clear upon his bloodless face. He soon began to eat hungrily, however, and to use Dr. Lockspur's phrase, "made blood" so rapidly that by the end of the week he was able to sit up half the day, to read, and to write letters. The next day he crept upstairs. There he settled himself in his own room, the little room with the two dormer windows, where his books were, and his guns, and all the other beloved paraphernalia.

He was curiously attached to this little room and nearly everything in it: the long squirrel rifle over the mantel with its box for patching and tallow in the stock, the wide low bookshelves, the double-barreled gun with silver mountings engraved with pictures of quail and bird dogs, the picturesque old powder flask and shotpouch and hunting horn hanging in the corner, the old brass student lamp, the drop-leaf table whereon he wrote letters to his friends and political articles for the papers, the high soft bed under the slope of the ceiling, in which at night he could hear the thrilling of the boughs

outside, and beat of the rain on the roof, and from which it had been his habit to bound to the middle of the floor every morning of his life with a joyous whoop and a plump of bare heels that jarred the windows. And in particular he loved a certain commodious old split-bottomed armchair which at the age of ten he had arrogated to his own use and painted a dark green.

In this chair, tilted against the corner by his western dormer window, whence he could see the rain upon the river and the wild duck flying, he had spent many fine hours in boyhood reading a book which had been recommended to him by Lockspur, who urged that he should skip the religious parts entirely, since they interfered with the steady movement of the narrative. The book was *Robinson Crusoe,* and Marmaduke read it all; and in the same chair, tilted back by the window in the same place, through his youth and young manhood, he read everything else he could lay hands upon, from *Tom Jones* to the *Idylls of the King;* and he got together, by hook or by crook, upon the low shelves within easy reach of his split-bottomed chair, a very excellent small library.

Most of these volumes he had purchased with money, but he was never very flush in his young days, and his title to some of them was based on the Elian assumption that he owns a book who best loves and reads it. His library contained the uncon-

senting autographs of all the old lawyers, doctors, and college professors in Spanishburg.

Amid these treasures, when he was fairly convalescent, he received on a memorable winter afternoon, a little letter from Diana. He had not seen her since the night she drove home with him; she had called at the house once, with her mother, but Dr. Lockspur considered Marmaduke too ill for company of any kind, and to give a practical weight to his opinion he had a guard posted at his chief's door. Marmaduke had hoped for some messages from Diana through Lorena, but the intimacy between these two was of a fitful nature, and at the present time, for some unexplained reason, was under eclipse.

The note was brief and formal; the lady had heard with pleasure that he was much better, and trusted that he would soon be out and able to see his friends, and she remained most sincerely his. He received it and read with a breathless eagerness. He had promised Lockspur he would not venture out that day, or he would have called at once for his horse: he must content himself with writing. He sat down immediately and composed a long letter. His table was drawn over to the window; the fire of green hickory logs was burning brightly, and he lifted his eyes now and then to look out at the clean gray winter woods, washed with cold sunshine. He was a long time over that letter; when

it was done he placed it in the table drawer, and leaned out of the window, musing upon the fleeting and vivid afternoon.

The day was well worn away. It was lonely under the great trees about the house, with a faint rustle of clinging dead leaves; as he leaned from the window he smelled the fragrant wood smoke. In far patches the last hard sunlight broke on certain gray ridges. Further away, and further than they seemed, the stately mountains stretched in white and purple across the east; in long noisy columns the crows were marshaled in the sky, heading for the gloomy bluffs across the river. There came a melodious call to cattle, and presently the sun was gone, leaving no color in the sky. From somewhere there came the peaceful quaver of a bird miscalled the screech-owl. Marmaduke heard, with a surge of delight in his blood, the murmur of the hidden creek, a cold, pure sound, unspeakably sweet and lonely.

A deep feeling of hope and happiness possessed him as he turned smiling from the window and went down to the Judge's bedroom.

Judge Marmaduke read transcripts that afternoon, drawing closer and closer to the window as the light receded. When it faded entirely he went to finish his papers by the blazing fire. He sat there absorbed in his reading, a gaunt and rugged figure, whose every movement expressed power and dignity; he frowned at his manuscript, holding it down

to the firelight, which deepened the lines of his face and sharpened the look of raptorial zest with which he pierced the meaning of the law-paper. He did not look up or speak when Lockspur and Upshaw entered, returning from a luckless shooting expedition in the bottoms, bringing only cockleburrs. He did not seem to notice Marmaduke when he appeared, but read on, turning the pages slowly. He moved a little to one side when old Joram clumped past him, bearing split red-oak forelogs, whose fresh tannic fragrance filled the room. The old slave sat on his heels and mended the fire; he had Moorish features and a beard, and in the land he had come from he might have been a chief and received obeisance.

Lorena made her appearance unobtrusively, speaking to no one; she sat regarding the fire with a look of anxiety in her blue eyes — an expression of mild perplexity, native to her face, the beauty of which it did not mar in the least. In her dainty blue dress she looked so fair and sweet that Dick Upshaw, to whom she was always an object of admiration, cruised across the room, drew up alongside, and gallantly delivered a broadside of compliments.

"Thank you, Dick," she said, "I haven't had anyone tell me that I was pretty since you all went away."

"Since Dave Romilly went away, you mean," said Lockspur.

"I didn't get to talk to David at all," said Lorena. "He only came one time, and stayed just a few minutes."

Marmaduke came over to the group. "What's that about Romilly?"

"I was just saying that he came only one time," said Lorena.

"I don't understand yet," said Marmaduke. "Is it possible that he has been back here?"

"Oh, didn't you know?" cried Lorena; she was always astonished that anybody should not know anything she knew.

"He was stationed here," explained Lockspur. "Recruiting hill-billies."

"I'll get all the news after awhile, I suppose," said Marmaduke, a bit resentfully. "Well, I am sorry he wasn't made to feel that he was welcome in this house."

"You can put the blame on me, Henry," said Mis' Carrie Lou, bringing in a lamp. "I said that I couldn't help but feel respect for Northerners, 'but a home-made Yankee,' I said, 'I hate, loathe, *and* despise.' That's what I said."

Marmaduke's face grew rather stern, but he said nothing. Romilly, he knew, had never been a prime favorite with his aunt; she liked a bold and forward young fellow with wealthy connections, and a dash of brandy about him. But if Romilly were all of this, and her own son, and had elected to serve in

the Union Army, she would have spurned him from her as a thing of evil.

"Well, by gad, madam," said Lockspur, reflectively, "I think you said a-plenty."

The old woman laughed and shrugged her shoulders.

"Oh, please, let us not talk about David," said Lorena. "I have heard him abused so much."

"You will not hear me abuse him," said Marmaduke.

"Nor me," said Lockspur.

"Nor me neither," said Upshaw.

"Dave Romilly," said Marse Jubal, putting aside his manuscript, and taking up the fire shovel to open the draught between the andirons, "Dave Romilly played the part of a friend by *me,* I am here to say that to ye. I never lost so much as a shoat or a bushel of corn. It's more than I expect if Bragg's Army ever gets here — they tell me they are cutting a swath five miles wide, and don't leave a nubbin." He flung aside the shovel and strode to the window, where he vigorously rubbed and dusted his hands, peering out at the tossing black branches. "Joram, them old turkeys are roosting in the apple tree again — they must be got down, and locked up. It's going to be a wild night, gentlemen, a wild night — better see there's plenty of wood in your room, Henry. Hain't we going to have any supper tonight, Carrie?"

"I think it is ready, what little there is," said Mrs. Bell.

The supper the company sat down to was very meager indeed, for that house of abundance, and Lockspur, for one, rose from the table with unsatisfied longings. "I am constrained to say once more," he remarked, generally, "that war ain't what it's cracked up to be."

A fire was laid in the big parlor, and Lockspur sat with Lorena far past the official bed-time at Eagle Bend. She was pleased to have his company again. All the memories of their old romance and kindly times together were dear to her heart and quite unspoiled by the fact that they were professed lovers no more, so long as she knew that at least she was not supplanted. Her heart was for David Romilly, but Jack Lockspur's beautiful love-making was a part of her life, enmeshed in all the fancies of her girlhood, and she was happy in remembering it, so long as no other woman led him captive.

She played and sang for him, and one of her songs was "Lorena," which put him in mind of the September Raid. He brought tears to her eyes with the story of Peter Dorgan. Their talk was long and serious and kind; there was no hint of renascent passion; they had such talk as persons may have who for an old love's sake are become dear friends.

"You seem greatly changed," she said. "You are serious."

"I am just the same," he protested. "Travel and experience don't modify the leopard's spots. Still, a man must flatter himself that he grows a little; it is disheartening to think that he must always be the same blundering fool he knows he once was."

"I shall always think of you as one of the finest men in all the world," she said, with quiet sincerity. "Have you met *her* yet, Jack?"

He shook his head, and she smiled contentedly, and taking the candle they left the room together. He bade her good-night in a whisper at the hall stairway.

"Good-night, Jack," she said. "It has been like old times."

Upstairs Lockspur found Marmaduke hobnobbing with Dick Upshaw over a pipe.

The room was pleasantly warm, for the wood fire had burned down to a huge bright carbuncle. Marmaduke was in his old armchair, with his blanket about him; and he and Upshaw sat smoking and talking at each other across the drop-leaf table, on which were books and tobacco. Literature, not war, was their theme; the books were Victor Hugo's.

"Come in, my old medicine man!" cried Marmaduke; his eyes were bright and dark, and his face, framed by long black hair, was transparently pale and sharp. "Come in and fill up your pipe. By Christopher, it has been a long time since we made

this old den blue with smoke! Do you remember the last time we three met here?"

"It was the night Romilly skedaddled," said Lockspur.

"I wish he were with us now," said Marmaduke.

"He told Judge Marmaduke he had asked to be transferred to the Army of the Potomac," said Upshaw.

"He made his bed; I suppose he found it a mighty cold place to lie in," said Lockspur. He threw himself back in a rocker, one leg over the arm of the chair. "But let us not talk about Romilly — the subject is painful, and I yearn for something cheerful and sustaining."

"I've got something cheerful and sustaining in the closet," said Marmaduke.

Both the Confederate officers, his guests, lifted faces of serious inquiry.

"Baked ham, stuck all over with spices?" queried Upshaw.

"Not that."

"Cold roast mutton and bottled stout," said Lockspur.

"No, it's not cold mutton," said Marmaduke. "And wherever in the name of Bacchus could I come by bottled stout?"

"I can't imagine, but it would be mighty fine."

"I know what you've got!" exclaimed Upshaw, visibly moved.

"What?"

"Souse!" cried the great partisan.

"Not that either," said Marmaduke.

"Oh, pickled pigs' feet!" shouted Lockspur.

"I will keep you in suspense no longer," said Marmaduke solemnly; from the closet he first produced two large dusty bottles of wine, and next a most enormous pasty. "Claret," he announced, and after a pause:

"Chicken pie. It's Lorena's treat."

"I see it with my own eyes, and yet it is incredible," murmured Lockspur.

"By ganney, I thought of chicken pie!" burst out Upshaw.

"So did I," said Lockspur, "but the thought seemed too ambitious; I dared not utter it."

"Fall to, my friends, and spare not," said Marmaduke. He smiled upon them in his guileless, kindly way; he was always greatly pleased to have his friends about him; he had a plain man's pleasure in simple things. Moreover, he held his companions in the highest esteem. Lockspur he considered remarkably clever, and Upshaw a marvel of sagacity. Now much of Lockspur's cleverness was frequently owing to his tenacious memory, and Upshaw's sagacity often a matter of saying nothing at the right time; but Marmaduke set the highest value upon all that was his, and these were his dear and distinguished friends — *his* friends, by Christopher!

In his perspective the earth was no mere speck of dust afloat in the infinite — not at all; life was close to his eyes, his universe was as circumscribed as that of the ancient Greeks, and the gods looked immediately down from high Olympus upon the State of Tennessee, the central spot in which was Eagle Bend.

His ambition had been that of any well-born youth who dances through all tasks as though they were but play and who mounts through his adolescence happily and nobly, in sheer excess of spirit and right feeling. That time — he remembered it well — was a time of visions and expectancy, warmed by the comradeship of friends. This, he had supposed, was the most desirable thing in the world.

Then love came his way, but he was not the man to wear his heart upon his sleeve for daws to peck at, nor friends to smile at. It was a secret passion. The others never suspected it, and he was the last man in the world to be communicative of such emotions. The only feeling he brought himself to speak of was his affection for his friends, and even this was a thing accomplished with much reserve: he had the Anglo-Saxon's instinctive fear of mawkishness.

But he did not hesitate to show in every way that his friends were most dear to him; and as the three men sat together, delving deep into the savory pasty, it would have been easy for an observer to

see that they were not sitting together for the first time over their meat and drink.

A step resounded upon the hall stairway. There was no mistaking that ponderous and portentous tread. They knew it of old, and from compelling force of habit both Lockspur and Marmaduke clutched away the bottles; then, instead of hiding them, they looked at each other rather shamefacedly, put them down, and laughed. Marse Jubal never came upstairs except upon some calling to account, and in the minds of these convivial friends that heavy step on the stair was associated with painful scenes and uncomfortable surprises.

They were still laughing when the door was pushed open, and old Jubal Marmaduke, tall, gaunt and imperious, strode into the little room. To the chambers below his port and character were native: those rooms were large, with high ceilings, generous windows, great gaping fireplaces, huge mantels and ample chairs. But though in this cheerful den sat Henry Marmaduke, a soldier of imposing presence, whose fame had traveled over the world and whose name was in the mouths of foreign people the old man had never heard of; though here sat Richard Upshaw, a man of mighty form and impressive silences; though here was Jack Lockspur, who was anything but a nonentity; yet when this formidable old Judge entered the room its walls seemed suddenly to shrink, and its proportions dwindled.

He glanced with a casual cold eye upon the wine, but he did not frown, his face rarely changed. I would not have you think that Marse Jubal had a dour or joyless face, for this would be the reverse of the fact; only it was serious, like the soul of the man. Austerity became him like a noble garment.

He stooped gigantic to the blazing hearth, and scooped a coal into his pipe, and puffed it in popping puffs which he let out rapidly under the corner of his short trimmed moustache; after this he rubbed and dusted his hands with great vigor, stood up suddenly, turned about, and with a forefinger hooked in his grizzled beard, bent his brows upon the company.

"The Yankees are coming," he said.

Marmaduke gave his father a sharp look; Upshaw blinked his eyes as though he had heard that before but had not had the opportunity to inform the company; Lockspur blurted out: "Why, how in the world did you find that out, Judge?"

"One of your scouts has just come in; he's down by the fire — more dead than alive."

"What forces does he report?" asked Marmaduke.

"The Union Army. I'll send him up, when he gets braced up a little. But I want a word with ye. I want to give ye some advice — all of ye. I say to you," he continued, throwing out his hand, "*you've done enough!* There's been fighting

enough. Hear to reason, now — hear to reason. In the North there are twenty million people — and in the South there are eight million. They've got men and money and ships, and factories and food and open ports, and more than that — when you see men by hundreds of thousands pouring out of the mills and the towns and coming in from the farms to fight for a great moral idea, look out for them! They'll crush ye — they'll crush ye utterly!"

And the old man strode from the room.

Marmaduke turned quickly to Upshaw. "Can you get the men ready to move by noon tomorrow?" he asked.

"But you can't ride!"

"Yes, I can ride. Get everything in readiness. What prisoners have you?"

"We couldn't handle the prisoners," said Upshaw. "I paroled 'em."

"You didn't parole Bigstaff, did you?"

Upshaw tugged at his moustache, uncrossed and recrossed his great legs. "The unfortunate truth is that Bigstaff broke out. Got away."

"It's a wonder I didn't hear this sooner," said Marmaduke. "How did it happen?"

"It's a tale easily told," broke in Lockspur. Marmaduke leaned with his elbow on the table, resting his head upon his left palm; he drew out a pencil and began marking on a pad of paper. "Let's have it," he said.

"You may remember," said Lockspur, "that Bigstaff was left a prisoner at the Fortune house."

"I have good reason to remember it," said Marmaduke, making heavy black marks.

"Well, it seems the young upstart was enamored of Diana, and the curious part of it is that she was crazy about him. It was a case of infatuation."

"How do you know?" asked Marmaduke.

"Everybody said so," said Lockspur.

"What everybody says must be so," said Marmaduke, drawing the letter D with elaborate ornamentation.

"Her mother said so," said Lockspur. "The event proved it, anyway. Old Micajah Lea was on guard, and the girl knew what an easy mark he was for liquor."

The pencil point snapped. Marmaduke, without changing his position, tossed it aside, took up a pen and continued to make marks.

"She brought him a quart of the most malignant apple brandy ever distilled," said Lockspur, "and he and his companion drank every drop of it."

Marmaduke glanced up at his friends with a smile, and moistened his lip.

"They dropped off to sleep, of course, along toward midnight, and Bigstaff jumped out of the window," concluded Lockspur.

Marmaduke reached for a pipe, and filled it. "Hand us a light, will you, Dick? Thanks. Quite

Colonel Bigstaff escapes

a story, Jack — quite a love story — only you don't usually associate love stories with quite so much apple brandy. I wonder if you didn't invent it? How about it, Dick?"

He had received a blow that shook his very soul, but there was no news of it in his face as he blew a cloud of smoke at Upshaw.

"He's got it about straight," said Upshaw. "I had it from her mother. She told me they were to have been married."

"Dick put the girl under arrest, you know," said Lockspur.

Marmaduke leaned again upon his elbow, cheek in palm. "Arrested her, did you?" he asked, quietly.

"Yes," said Upshaw, pulling his moustache. "Yes, I did."

There was silence for a time. Marmaduke wrote busily upon a fresh sheet.

"Have everything in readiness," he said finally. "Draw and cook three days' rations. Give this to Bullitt, will you? It's the order of march. — So you put the young lady under arrest! Now, do you know what I think?" He turned upon Dick Upshaw with a look of cold displeasure. "I think, considering the bad blood there was once between her family and mine, you might have consulted me."

Lockspur laughed easily. "Don't kill him," he

said. "By gad, you look like Marse Jubal; I never saw the resemblance before. You were too sick to consult about that or anything else. No one knew how bad off you were but Upshaw and myself; the command would have gone wild if it had been blown upon. Even Bullitt didn't know. The responsibility is mine, Colonel. Jump on me."

"I simply did what I thought you would have done," said Upshaw, the increasing redness of his face indicating that in his opinion here was a great to-do about a woman. "I put her under arrest a few days in her own house, that was all."

"Oh, that way!" said Marmaduke. "Did she make any statement?"

Upshaw's redness deepened to purple. "Colonel," he said, "I had a great deal to do — too much, in fact, to spend my time cross-examining the females of this community. The girl was pretty shifty; her lover was in trouble; she helped him out of it — that's the whole thing in a nutshell."

"So you think it was a love affair, too," said Marmaduke.

"I know damned well it was a love affair," growled Upshaw, smoking very fast.

Marmaduke rose. "Go down and interview this scout — both of you. If he has any news that I should know at once, bring it up to me."

"We won't bother you unless it is urgent," said Lockspur. "You'd better go to bed."

"Yes," said Upshaw. His resentment fled as quickly as it came. He looked at his chief's pale face with concern. "You ain't half as strong as you think you are. You go to bed."

"I think I shall," Marmaduke said. "I'll see you early. Good-night."

"Go to bed. We'll 'tend to things," said Upshaw, as he left the room. "You're gray as ashes."

When his guests had departed Marmaduke sat for a long time without moving.

Upshaw's last words floated in the air, as last words sometimes do when spoken in a still place, like the vibration from the last clap of a bell. Gray as ashes! He went to the glass and took a look at himself, pushing back his hair and smiling derisively.

Late in the night old Jubal, roused in his sleep, lay awake for awhile listening to a fitful tramping overhead. He stole upstairs in his slippers and thrust a face of anxious concern into Marmaduke's room. The candles had burned out, and the young man sat by the hearth, bending over the dying fire.

"Why, son, hain't you going to bed at all tonight?" demanded the Judge.

Marmaduke sprang up briskly and looked at his watch, which he began to wind. "I hardly realized it was so late," he said, smiling. "I'm going this minute."

The old man withdrew, and Marmaduke, taking his letter to Diana from the table drawer, crumpled

it into a ball and placed it upon the coals. It caught and blazed, lighting up his face, which was pinched and haggard.

"Poor damned sentimentalist," he said with a short laugh. "Your dream is ended."

CHAPTER XIX

THE LONG RAID

HE DID not see Diana again. The next day at noon the cavalry left Spanishburg, riding silently in the falling snow. He had suffered a tragic disappointment; and he could not think of Diana without bitterness. Her behavior was not all of a piece, and he was puzzled as well as disappointed. But he himself had told her the peculiar weakness of Bigstaff's guard, and she had lost no time in putting the knowledge to practical use. It did not lessen his umbrage to remember that she was thus occupied precisely at the time that he, Henry Marmaduke, was hovering between life and death; and it was with a strange spirit of jealousy and recklessness that he took up his military duties. Dr. Lockspur, in his *Memoirs of Marmaduke's Cavalry,* notes a change in him after they left Spanishburg; he rapidly regained his vigor and spirits, but he developed a sneering cynicism, his humor became sardonic. At the same time there seemed no diminution of his lust for glory. That spring and summer he put into effect one wild enterprise after another, till at last he conceived and planned a feat of arms so brilliant and hazardous that even Lockspur, at first, had misgivings.

It was no less a project than a cavalry raid with picked men and fast horses into the heart of the North. What great military purpose he expected to accomplish by it he made very clear to himself and to his officers; but when his military reason was set forth in writing, without his rich persuasiveness and the fiery instancy of his conviction, it sobered down into a simple scheme to "create a diversion."

The enemy's plans of campaign would be utterly upset, and the Confederate army in Tennessee, whose position was perilous, would by the hurried withdrawal of troops in its front be saved from disaster. All this was to be accomplished by swinging out with his thousands of veteran horsemen through the states just north of the Ohio. It would be a big thing — the whole world would notice it.

Deeply hidden from ourselves are the springs of human action, and Marmaduke was no self-analyst. He was aware of a self-love sorely wounded, but he did not connect this with his burning desire to raid the towns beyond the Ohio.

He submitted his plan to his superiors. They considered it, complimented it, and rejected it. He was told to confine his operations to Kentucky. He said nothing, but went back to his friends in a flaming rage. He rarely took his staff into his confidence; when he wanted counsel he summoned Upshaw and Lockspur; sometimes he consulted old Micajah Lea. Although Lockspur was chief sur-

geon of the brigade, so cleverly did he delegate the duties of his office that he had most of his time free for purely military exploits and personal adventures.

"I'd do it anyhow!" cried the Doctor.

Marmaduke flushed darkly, "What do *you* say, Dick?"

Upshaw blew out a cloud of smoke, and turning his eyes to Marmaduke gravely blinked and nodded.

Marmaduke clapped the back of his fist upon his palm. This ended the council.

In less than two weeks he crossed the Ohio river under a blaze of militia fire, and bore away upon his long and desperate raid.

A cry of fright and indignation went up. He found that here his fame was infamy. The people left their houses, with their breakfasts smoking on the table, when the raiders, slouch-hatted, dust-covered and travel-worn, rolled in long columns through the towns and villages. The roar of their horses' hoofs aroused the entire country; all in all a force ten times greater than Marmaduke's was in the field to catch him. There was no rest, no real sleep — only a wild hurrying on, with incessant fighting — the raid was a constant round of flying skirmishes.

They swept through Indiana in a swirl of heat and dust; they entered Ohio, and circled around Cincinnati in the night. Marmaduke rode at the head

of the column; regiment after regiment came after him, as closely as they could. After they were separated, the rear detachments found the right road by observing, in the light of their torches, the drift of the thick dust and the slaver of the horses. All that night they rode, and all the next day, with only an hour or so for rest or a skirmish with militia. So the raid went through the summer days, at first joyously, with a whoop and a hurrah, then more sedately, and at last grimly and silently, as they raced with disaster. At times they had to stop and clear the road of fallen trees, with which the enemy hoped to check their advance; sometimes, when the road went through a valley, they ran the gauntlet of fire from the hills. The enemy could not assemble in masses in their front, for they could not know which way Marmaduke was going, but they followed in his rear in ever increasing numbers. There was no pause now for the rangers; there was no mercy for man or beast. Hundreds of men gave out, but Marmaduke kept up the organization of his command and held them to their course, riding, riding, for six hundred merciless miles, and at last, with countless enemies in his wake, brought them to the place he had selected for recrossing the Ohio.

By morning he would have his men in Virginia; * and he would have successfully completed the most

*Now West Virginia.

brilliant raid of the war: he would have achieved his destiny.

But hurry as he would, that last day went fatally slow. Horribly wearied, men and horses went stumblingly: the troopers slept in the saddle, or falling by the way, rolled over in the dust, and were captured by the pursuing infantry. Night came upon the remainder before they reached the ford, and when they got there at last, with the fog of deadly exhaustion upon them, they heard the river roaring angrily in the dark through its wide reaches of shoal. Marmaduke knew at once that the swollen stream could not be crossed that night.

The rangers slipped from their saddles and flung themselves upon the ground. In vain the officers pulled and hauled, and urged and threatened; the men could stir no further; the imperative command of nature was no longer to be put off. Soon nearly all of the command, including the greater portion of the guard, lay helpless and insensible on the ground. It was like a blighting enchantment.

A few of the hardier men were awake and alive to their peril. These Marmaduke put to work collecting boats and rafts for the crossing at daybreak. When they had done all they could do, he mounted guard himself, listening to the hostile river, and thinking of Diana. Time had cured his bitterness. He had indeed long since ceased to think of her with any resentment; it had come to him gradually

that he had been hasty and jealous and had misjudged her. This night, in particular, his heart went out to her with an unconquerable rush of emotion; her face and voice haunted him with infinite kindness, and kept him company until dawn.

But when the morning came and the mists lifted, what a sight met his eyes! The cavalry were in a valley, and upon all the hills about them, and blocking every road in their rear were masses of blue infantry. The enemy, so long eluded, had come up in the night innumerably strong; he stood upon the hills very much at ease, making no immediate attack. There did not seem to be any reason for hurry. A few small gunboats steamed slowly up the river and opened on the cavalry.

Marmaduke set his howitzers at work. These succeeded in driving off the gunboats, and upon this the Confederates threw out a defensive line of skirmishers. Behind this shelter Marmaduke began to draw the regiments out of the valley as fast as they could be loaded into the boats. Many of the men, being experienced in such work, were able to swim their horses across, and in one way or another the Old Squadron succeeded in reaching the opposite bank. It looked at one time as if the whole command might escape, and Marmaduke with a part of his staff plunged into the stream. His horse had reached a stretch of shoal water more than half way across, when, looking back, he saw that his

defensive lines were giving way; the enemy had opened on them with Parrotts. He turned his horse about at once.

Lockspur was just behind him. "Why don't you go on?" he cried. "Don't you see the woods are full of them?"

"Follow these men over, if you want to," said Marmaduke. "I am going back after the balance of my men."

"They are breaking!" said Lockspur. "For God's sake get away while you can!" His voice was almost a scream. "What good would it do for you to be gobbled with them?"

Voices of the soldiers came from the boat ahead. "Come on, Marmaduke! Come on, Colonel! Come on, Doctor! Marmaduke — come on!"

But Marmaduke saw the bulk of his command in a valley circled with a ring of fire, and he did not go on. Lockspur watched him with haggard eyes as he went down in the water again with his horse. "Well, by Gad, if it comes to that, I'll stay with you!" And he, too, wheeled his horse and went with his chief back over the river. They reached the body of the command unscathed, but they found it in a disorder that was sickening.

Hundreds of stragglers were galloping about the valley in a frightful panic. Many of these clung frantically to articles they had acquired in pillaging — bundles of dry-goods, hams, and civilian clothing.

Dashing to the rear, the long train of wagons jammed the pass. The horses, cut out by their drivers, or freed by kicking, plunged over the men and wagons. A section of howitzers, useless for want of ammunition, ran into the retreating cavalry; the horses plunged and turned the men and guns rolling into a deep gulch. The shells were now coming in three directions; but the enemy's lines made no effort at a rush; they closed as a fish-net.

"Now," cried Lockspur, "why didn't you stay out when you were out?"

"Perhaps we can leave the horses and escape through the woods."

"You can't do it," cried Lockspur. He was almost sobbing, but he calmed himself presently, and dismounting, walked beside his horse.

The fighting lines that had stood so bravely were now coming back at a run, with empty guns.

"We've simply lost," said Lockspur.

Marmaduke looked around at the ridges; the tint of the American army blue was everywhere. He looked up into the sky and then at that murderous panic in the valley, and he thought of the women at home who waited for these men. They were all very young — they were but children of the sword, and yet victory after victory had perched upon their ragged little banners. Marmaduke was staring hard at the smoky woods in an agony of irresolution when Upshaw, with Old Thousand-Yards, galloped

up and reported what Marmaduke already knew, that the lines were falling back. At the pommel of Micajah's saddle there hung a bolt of bleached domestic. No one who knew his men as Marmaduke knew them need ask why he clung to this particular loot: it was to carry home for shirts and dresses for the little army of tow-heads in Micajah's cabin. An half hour more of such fighting as this and no soldiers in that command would ever go back to their homes in Tennessee.

" Here, let's have that white stuff — two yards of it — cut it — slash it! Quick, man!"

Micajah went galloping back to the field, the white flag stuck on a guidon staff, and as he rode, the firing slackened and died away.

Marmaduke sat still upon his horse, looking with burning eyes upon the humiliation of his arms.

CHAPTER XX

DIANA AT EAGLE BEND

THE winter set in early that year in Tennessee. By the middle of November the wind had blown the treetops bare at Eagle Bend. There came a series of grim, gray, gusty days, with the leaves scurrying up the hill and down again; and on one of these days Diana Fortune and her mother came over to pay a visit. It was less than a week after the downfall of the Marmaduke cavalry, and before the news had come to Spanishburg.

Mrs. Fortune made sore complaint of the bitter weather. Her heart was urban; she had never ceased to express her regret that she must live out of town, nor wavered once in her resolution to find in country life nothing but dreariness and hopeless discomfort. Diana found everything else in it. All her days she had loved the winter in the country, rejoicing in its frosty glories, its vigor, its moods, its snows and sunsets, its exquisite colors and austere sincerities; she loved, as she loved few other things, each feature of the winter day: gray field and purple hill, cold rain upon the forest, the blazing log in the library, sweet flute of bush-sparrows in the wet briers, wood smoke in the hollows, sudden

clamor of crows in the sunny distance, and the chill and changing splendors of the endless mountains. To her there was something pitiful in the conventional mind which found, or affected to find, a sadness in the falling leaf, a spiritual grayness in sunless weather. Her father had opened her eyes to this. Their tacit conspiracy of delight in the winter's loveliness was one of the ties that bound father and daughter together in rare companionship. He was experienced and accurate, he knew the common names of things, and his kindly eyes and voice and fellowship, spirited and gay by times, but habitually serious, were associated with every beautiful adventure by field and flood. Diana had an exceptional capacity for gratitude, and for no gift of his was she more tenderly grateful than his teaching her to see with clear eyes the beauty of winter, and to love gray days.

But this year Mr. Fortune was detained in Richmond. Mrs. Fortune cared nothing for the great outdoor world; her interest was all in people — the people of Spanishburg; comings and goings, engagements, births, deaths, and dresses. Diana would gather these items and feed them to her parent as she fed stale crumbs to the birds, and with as little taste for them. There was deep affection between mother and daughter but they made a poor business of keeping each other company.

In truth, Diana found herself solitary, and she

made the discovery that her pride in her own resources had a weak foundation, and she saw no sapphire in the winter hills if there was no one to share it. She had friends in Richmond to whom she had written letters, such good letters that they could breathe the finer breath of her life, and see the color of her environment. They knew her winter world and its treasures — her beloved weird white sycamores by the stream, her ineffable fields of trembling sedge, the brooding silence of her mountains, and the perfect neutral colors of her wooded ridges — garnet and gray and violet. She did not confess that now, sometimes, the solitude became oppressive, that she became timid and even fearful when she walked alone in the forests. More than once the face of nature itself put on an unfriendly expression; it was as though having made a trusted pet of some great wild animal, the creature had turned in a lonely place and snarled at her.

It was at this time, too, that she lost interest in the war. She had studied it, and during the first year kept up with it, as a fascinating game. Now her map of the Southern States, with its trail of battles in red ink, and the positions of the opposing armies marked with black pins and white pins, had fallen into disuse. The armies remained where they stood on the day that Marmaduke rode away from Spanishburg without telling her good-by.

It was not until he was gone that she heard

through her mother that the town was " ringing," as Mrs. Fortune said, with the story of a woman's strategy to enable her lover to escape. She knew at once that this must have come to Marmaduke's ears, and her first mental attitude was the natural feminine one of stiffening pride; if he wished to believe such things, without going to the trouble of finding out the truth, there was no help for it. She would go far to right a misunderstanding, but certainly she would not stoop to explain or run after an angry man to defend her conduct. That he was angry was apparent: he had not even answered her little note — the only note she had ever written him.

She was quite clear as to her sentiment in the matter; it was not a case of heartbreak over a shattered romance. She had been trained to observe closely and to think clearly; and she had observed that in her day, at least, the sentiment of romantic passion was considerably overdone. In the artificial atmosphere of war time the languorous mid-Victorian sentimentalism had grown into a kind of monstrosity, flourishing rankly, like sectional hatred. There was in Diana's nature a chastity of sentiment which it affronted and repelled — not that she was ascetic or prudish — far from it. With the attentions of the young men who sought after her she was pleased, for she liked to be admired; and she was beautifully kind to them, for she loved to give pleasure. But she would never give her heart, her

soul, herself. She heard matter-of-fact young women speak glibly of being in love; she saw the theme treated in books as the main concern of life, as surely it was of literature. And sometimes she wondered lightly if it could be that she was by nature cynical and cold-hearted that she should regard it honestly as a fetich, a factitious thing. The reflection did not greatly trouble her: she went her way and lived her own life, as wilful and as free of sentimentality as the divine huntress whose name she bore.

It was on the score of friendship that she had suffered at Marmaduke's hands. Here she was vulnerable. Her conception of friendship was exalted. It seemed to her the rarest gift of life; her darling wish was to make and keep good friends. She had heard of Marmaduke, before she knew him, that he was one — the chief, indeed — in a circle of devoted friends, and it had been a happy prepossession, it gave him at once a kind of nobility. This kind of relationship was something warm and red-blooded and vividly definite, just as romantic love was dream-like and elusive; she knew it even to her cost, for she was tenderly sensitive to any neglect or indifference on the part of one she called friend.

And Marmaduke she had called her friend, and pointedly and crudely he had slighted her. She was obliged to suspect that it was because of jealousy, but that did not ease the pain of the dis-

appointment. What right had he to be jealous? Her pride and independence of spirit were up in arms at the thought. And what right had he to condemn her upon common hearsay rumors? There was but one small shadow of reason for his displeasure with her; Colonel Bigstaff was a Federal officer, and in conniving at his escape she injured the cause to which Marmaduke was devoted, and so, by a remote indirection, she injured him.

As time passed her resentment softened — not because the wound had ceased to be painful, but because she took, by a natural transition, a clearer view. She realized one day that she had seen the affair altogether in the light of her own knowledge and experience. Marmaduke could not know her motive for helping Bigstaff; he could not possibly see it as the innocent outcome of her successful effort to serve *him*. Indeed, he did not know that in any signal or expensive way he had been served by her at all. In helping Bigstaff she had acted so fully within her own right — as she saw it — that she had overlooked this simple fact. When it dawned upon her it loomed huge and obvious; she was shocked and abased before her own obtuseness. She saw that her whole attitude had been unworthy — and how poorly did it measure up to the magnanimity she had so arrogantly expected of him!

So, in the end, she came to think of him as she had first thought, in the surprise and thrill of their

new acquaintance. That thought was that he was *big,* that he had grace and distinction — and Diana loved distinction in everything, from the cut of her riding skirt to the choice of her ancestors, from the paper she wrote letters on to the personality of a friend. He had more than distinction; he had become distinguished. He rode through her world as a conquering knight, far-famed like Launcelot; she gloried in his name and valiancy, and more than all else she rejoiced in his success — his imperial success.

She had kept a record of his military achievements, as we have seen. For a long time the volume of clippings which she had pleased herself in making and binding with fastidious care and taste, was mysteriously missing. She found it at last thrust through and behind a row of books, and she was content to recover it, never wondering whose hand it was that pushed it there. She took up the record where it was broken off. Some day, she thought, when all misunderstanding was over, it would be fine to make him a present of it; she would then tell him how it was that Bigstaff had escaped, and everything would be right again.

For fresh material she went to Mis' Carrie Lou, for to any one who would listen the old lady would talk endlessly of her famous nephew, and give them marked copies of papers to take home and read. Diana's interest in him appeared to her but just and

proper; were Marmaduke her own son she could not have had a greater complacency.

Of late the news had been conflicting, even a little disquieting, and Diana's first speech, when she entered the house, was a demand for the latest intelligence. "Don't let us talk about the severe winter, or the bad roads, or famine prices: tell us news at once!" she cried.

"Bless you, haven't any," said Mis' Carrie Lou. "I made sure when I saw you coming that you had heard something."

A fire had been started in the parlor for the visitors, and as its bustling flames had not as yet made much impression on the big chill room, Diana ran to it and stood warming herself, now thrusting one slender foot over the fender, now the other. Mrs. Fortune sat on the edge of a chair, locked up for the winter, as it were, in her own arms. Marse Jubal poked the fire till it bellowed in the chimney. Lorena sat in serious silence, coldly observing Diana, her rich coloring and her clothes; she perceived that the latter were not new, but she mentally noted that they looked well on her.

"Oh, this awful war!" said Mrs. Fortune. She had no kinsman engaged in it; to her it was merely an expensive inconvenience. "I don't see why they don't stop it. Have any more of your negroes left, Mrs. Bell?"

Mis' Carrie Lou made a wave of her hand.

"Don't mention negroes to me! I've got to that point where I wish the black creatures had never been born! I'd be willing to part company forever with the whole tribe of them if it would bring Henry Marmaduke home again."

"When he comes," said Judge Marmaduke, "I hope he will have better luck than he had last time. The only wound he ever got was in Spanishburg."

"By the way, Diana," said Mis' Carrie Lou, "I always meant to ask you — did you ever get any word from Colonel Bigstaff?"

"No," said Diana.

"I thought maybe he wrote back to you. You liked him right well, didn't you?"

"Yes," said Diana.

"You must have thought a heap of him, to act the way you did," said the old woman. She was preparing to institute a general inquisition on the subject, not from malice but from shameless curiosity. Diana decided that it was not necessary.

"He was not only kind to me but to my mother," said she. "He had a double claim on my gratitude."

"He tried to kill Henry," the old lady persisted.

"There are several thousand Union soldiers engaged at present in the same attempt," said Diana, firmly turning the conversation. "The last news I heard of him was that twenty thousand troops were in pursuit of him."

"How terrible," said Mrs. Fortune.

"I saw that. You see all kinds of stuff in the papers," said Mis' Carrie Lou.

"I wish Henry had never undertaken that raid," said Lorena.

"He will take care of himself, Miss Chicken-heart," said the old woman, scratching her head. "What do you see now, Jubal?"

The old Judge had started up like a watchful mastiff, and without deigning a reply to his sister, strode to the window.

The two elder ladies fell into talk about making coffee out of parched wheat, and Lorena and Diana joined Judge Marmaduke at the window. They stood on either side of the gaunt old Judge — Lorena fragile, dainty and fair, her golden hair lustrous in the light from the big window — Diana dark-eyed, with masses of dark hair framing her face, her rich coloring deepened by the recent tussle with the wind, her scarlet-lined cloak drawn away from her shapely shoulders.

The object of their attention was a ragged little man with a big moustache mounted on a muddy, flea-bitten gray horse, with a sheepskin for a saddle blanket.

Diana recognized him at once. It was her old acquaintance, the vender of melons and game and fish and willow baskets; he came sometimes to the house to re-bottom the chairs with hickory bark and

white-oak "splits." She remembered that it was to his cabin that Marmaduke had come first on the night of his return to Spanishburg; and she had heard him speak of the little man as "my friend." The phrase invested him with a curious distinction. "Why, it's Joe Dockery!" she cried.

"Bless my life, so it is!" The Judge raised the sash. "Hitch your horse, Joe, and come in!" he shouted, and put the window down.

Presently a cold draught informed the company that the outer door was open. Thus far Joe had ventured, and he would come no further without due parley. Judge Marmaduke found him fixed in the doorway.

"How are you, Joe?" said the Judge.

"I'm jist about as common, I thank ye — jist cripplin' about," said Joe. "How air all you-uns?"

"Middling," said the Judge. "Come in, come in."

Joe was immovable; he was not to be hurried into any man's house.

"I hain't hardly got time, I reckon," he said. He held resolutely to the door knob, the icy wind fluttering his coat tails. "Looks like we might be goin' to have some fallin' weather," he added, in a loud voice.

"Maybe so," said the Judge. "Come in, come in."

"Hit hain't sca'cely worth while," said Joe, and

he contemplated the door knob, as though reluctant to give it up.

"Come in and sit down by the fire," said the Judge.

"My feet is awful muddy," said Joe, doubtfully.

"Come in and shut the door!" cried the Judge, his courtesy sorely tried. "You're freezing the house up!"

Thus encouraged, Joe abandoned the door knob to its fate, and with a look of grave determination in keeping with the seriousness of the undertaking, he slowly advanced into the house, setting one foot cautiously and firmly before the other, as though suspicious of treachery on the part of the flooring. In this meticulous fashion he arrived at length at a place by the parlor fire, where, having saluted the company with a comprehensive "Howdy do?" he sat down. His clothing was faded to a greenish yellow, his coarse brogans were tied with willow bark, but when he had finally established himself he parted company with self-consciousness and sat upright and alert, observing with interest the rather ornate appointments of the room. It was not often that Joe Dockery sat in a rich man's parlor, but he sat at ease.

"I hope you are well, Joe," said Lorena.

"Nothin' to boast of, I thank ye. I've suffered a right smart here lately with the in*di*gestion," said Joe, promptly; and pleased with the opportunity for

so distinguished a hearing he pursued the subject unabashed. "I reckon," he declared, with a smile, addressing the company at large, "I reckon ye see before ye the worst afflicted man that was ever hear'd tell of in this country. Dyspepsy, some folks call it, and some says it's my liver, and some says it's spinal arrytation, but hit's a de-sease that baffles the doctors. I jist wisht ye could see me when I have one o' them trimblin' spells; hit's a sight the way I suffer. My circulation gits clogged and my heart goes *thong! thong!* and I've had that snaky feelin' uncommon bad this fall. Last week I took sich a crampin' I thought I'd die —"

Mis' Carrie Lou broke in sharply, "Did you bring us any news of the war, Joe?"

"I thought I'd die," continued Joe. "I know in reason I must have busted the linin' of my stomach —"

"You didn't come here to tell us about your afflictions, Joe," said Mis' Carrie Lou

"I busted the linin' of my stomach," said Joe, fixing Mis' Carrie Lou with a reproachful eye. "I jist wish you could be worked like I am sometime; maybe you —"

"You were sent here with a message," said Mis' Carrie Lou. "What is it, Joe?"

"I hain't able to say," said Joe, much depressed at being forced to abandon the congenial theme. "I went up to git some medison from that army

doctor this mornin', and as I was comin' away Major Falconer give me this writin' for the Judge here. Maybe hit will tell a straighter tale than I kin." With this he passed a paper to Marse Jubal.

It was a copy of a telegram from the War Department, folded in military style, and endorsed: "Respectfully referred to Judge Marmaduke for his information and guidance."

Judge Marmaduke read the telegram, glanced up, scratched his beard, read it again; and without looking at her he passed the paper to his sister; rising, he busied himself mending the fire.

"Read it to us, Lorena — I haven't my glasses," said Mrs. Bell.

Lorena read:

To the Commanding Officer, Spanishburg: Marmaduke and his men overcome by superior numbers and captured at Bodington Island, Ohio River. Marmaduke and fifty officers taken to Columbus for confinement in state prison. Notify relatives.

Jubal Marmaduke made a thorough business of re-making the fire; old Mis' Carrie Lou sat still and white; Mrs. Fortune's voice alone was heard, murmuring surprise and sympathy. Upon Diana the news fell with a stunning effect that precluded instant pain; she felt bewildered, she could not speak.

"I can't seem to grasp it," said Mis' Carrie Lou.

Having recovered her spectacles she took up the telegram to read it for herself. Lorena passed out of the room. There was no outcry, no exclamation. Only the wind was heard, thrashing the great trees and hammering at the windows.

Joe Dockery rose and buttoned his ragged coat: "I mought have brought worse news than that. It mought have told ye that Colonel Marmaduke was killed, and named the place whar he was buried. I hope ye'll take comfort of that, and not be disencouraged none," he said, "and I bid ye good-evenin'." With this he departed. The simple sufficiency of his speech rallied Diana; she made shift to express herself, incoherently, inadequately, but with such manifest sympathy and understanding that the benumbed old woman revived. She broke into tragic speech, demanding of her brother that he move heaven and earth to get Henry exchanged, if it took all he possessed. "Henry can't live in prison, he will grieve himself to death!" she cried. "You oughtn't to lose a day. Go to Richmond and see Mr. Davis — use every influence — I never knew you to fail to do anything you set out to do. You can't let Henry lay down and die there in that horrible place — it isn't as if he was a poor man, with no people to back him. I want you to go to Richmond tonight!"

The old man listened quietly, bending forward in his chair and holding his palms to the blaze; now

and then he turned his bleak eyes upon her in silence.

When her voice gave out he quietly delivered his mind. "I want to remind you," he said, "that when King David wished to put a man out of the way, so that he might never come home to his people any more, he did not keep that man in prison. No. He set him in the forefront of the battle."

He paused and stared fixedly at the flames. His imagination was busy with contending armies; he saw once more the rolling rifle smoke and the bursting shells as he had seen them on the windy plains of Palo Alto, and on the bloody day that Buena Vista fell; he saw again hundreds of young men falling about him dead upon the ground — the flower of the land. "The forefront of the battle," he repeated, smiting and rubbing his hands together; then he rose and went out.

Diana made her escape from the house, not knowing how, or that she had forgotten her mother. Under the open sky the full meaning of that blunt despatch struck home. Burningly it came to her what Marmaduke had suffered — humiliation and defeat — his power and prestige forever lost — his brave spirit broken — his destiny extinguished in hopeless captivity!

Her throat was afire, her chin quivered and she bit her lip. A blind rush of emotion seized and shook her convulsively, she sobbed like a child, but

for something more than grief. Beneath it was a wilding joy, a tragic gladness. For not till his star was set did she know how well she loved him.

CHAPTER XXI

THE TUNNEL

AFTER the battle at Bodington the prisoners were put on board a steamboat and carried down the river, but Dr. Lockspur escaped. He said he would rather drown than be a prisoner, and so, unobserved, he jumped from the deck and made for the shore. Much to his own surprise, he succeeded in reaching it. This was on the Ohio side, and when he had become possessed of civilian clothing, he found that he could travel in that country with comparative freedom from molestation. So much was this the way that he became royally careless and venturesome, and hazarded the new fortune of liberty by a trip into the city of Louisville.

There his luck turned. In the lobby of the Galt House he came under the observation of old acquaintances who wore the blue clothing of the United States Army. These gentlemen were glad to see Lockspur, but they did not consider it at all proper for an enemy of the Flag to be so very much at large. They accordingly invited him to become, as it were, their guest, and as their inducements were irresistible, he did so. They kept him in Louisville as long as they could, and in his *Memoirs* he

records his grateful recollections of the convivial kindness of his captors. In the spring the prisoner was yielded to the State of Ohio, which desired his presence in Columbus. The journey there was short and pleasant, and full of good cheer, for his officer friends came with him. At the end of the trip was a great gloomy building of brick and stone.

"What layout is this?" demanded Lockspur, stepping somewhat unsteadily.

"The State penitentiary," some one replied.

"And who are you?" said Lockspur.

"I am the Warden," said the other.

Lockspur regarded the official for a moment solemnly, then he put out his hand and smiled. Lockspur's smile was always disarming. "I hope we shall be good friends, Mr. Warden," he said.

"Sure to," said the Warden. "Hope you'll make us a long visit."

At the sound of Lockspur's voice there came piling out of the long tiers of cells dozens of the officers of Marmaduke's Cavalry. They had upon them the jail bleach and the jail irritability, and they welcomed Lockspur's arrival as a lively sensation. "Hello, Lockspur — Hello, Doc! — Hello, Littleun!" they called, and "Hello, hello!" he replied. "Hello, Upshaw! How are you, Haywood? Here's old Tom Morgan, by gad! De Graffenreid, my boy, give me your hand! Jim Field, put it there! Bullitt, Vertrees, Cooke, McClung! —

gentlemen, I am happy to rehearse once more the names of my dear friends! But where is Marmaduke? Where is my Captain? Where is Marmaduke, the Flower of Cavaliers?"

"Come in, I'll show you," said Upshaw.

The chief was writing at a small table, and when Lockspur entered the cell he sprang up and took the Doctor's hand in both of his.

"Welcome to our midst!" he cried. His black locks were gone, he was dressed in coarse jeans, and he was the inmate of a convict's cell, but these mean facts appeared to have but little effect on the man himself. Lockspur saw his chief as he had always known him, standing at ease in his own character under all circumstances; he was the commanding officer still. "By Christopher, how it warms my heart to see you, Jack! Light up your pipe and tell me all about it — no, wait! Come outside, so all the boys can hear the news!"

Officers of the field and staff and captains and lieutenants of the line listened with strained attention to Lockspur's account of his adventures, and plied him with questions as to the doings down in Dixie. His narration was interrupted by the march to supper; he took up the tale again when they came back, but he had not fully satisfied the general hunger for news when a turnkey came and rapped on the hall stove with a piece of iron. The party broke up.

"What 's this?" said Lockspur.

"Taps," said Marmaduke. "Come along with me — you have been assigned to my cell."

Lockspur followed Marmaduke into his cell, talking still, but in lower tones, as they undressed for bed. The conversation came to an end when Marmaduke rolled into his bunk and covered his head with his blanket, but Lockspur remained wide awake. He heard the lock-step of the convicts in the other wing of the building. Then, when each had gained his cell, there began a great banging and clashing. To him the clangors of the locking-in seemed to fill the prison for hours, dying out each minute as if done with, and in the successive minute renewed, as the thick iron doors were slammed and the heavy bolts shot home. A turnkey came at last to their own cell, lighting the gas and locking them in. In time the reverberations ceased, but Lockspur could not sleep.

He lay on his bunk with sudden tossings and waves of unrest. The prison was filled with a characteristic human fetor — faint, yet loathsome; and the air was oppressively heavy. Outside, he knew, the night winds of summer were blowing over the Ohio towns and rivers and fields, and the long Kentucky meadows, clear down to the mountains and lowlands of Tennessee, where the Old Squadron, doubtless, was on picket — half starved, perhaps, but free to ride and fight and breathe pure air.

He sat up and sighed. A single jet of gas was

burning dimly in the cell, and by its light he saw that Marmaduke was apparently asleep, with the cover drawn over his head. But from under the blanket came a voice: "Can't you sleep?"

"No," said Lockspur. "I've got the whole weight of the building on my chest."

Marmaduke rose and stepped over to Lockspur's bunk.

"I can't sleep either; I might as well tell you now about the big job. We are working at a plan to get out of here." And sitting beside Lockspur in the dim light he told him the story of the tunnel they had digged.

The building was a massive one, of stone, cement, and iron; it had a yard surrounded by a stone wall twenty-five feet high; in the yard a pack of especially trained mastiffs were loosed at night and on the walls were sentry towers from which regular soldiers kept vigilant guard. Moreover, the prisoners were bolted in their cells every night, and kept under the continual surveillance of list-slippered turnkeys. With the problem of escape before him, material and immediate, Marmaduke was terribly at bay; but he had made up his mind. It may have been a chance thought which afforded a solution, or it may have been his feverish mental activity which compelled it: at any rate, he hit upon a practicable idea. In studying the situation he found that the walls of the lower tier of cells were remarkably dry and free

from mould. He concluded that an air chamber ran beneath.

The account of the operations that he began as a result of this inspiration is very interesting to me — quite as much so as the subterranean adventures of the Count of Monte Cristo; there is a complete story of the enterprise in Lockspur's *Memoirs* — a tale of heroic toil, great cunning, ingenious forethought, multitudinous devices to preclude detection, Napoleonic attention to detail, and above all a sort of godlike patience. How the tunnel was digged and the secret kept would make a very long chapter, and besides a shadow of commonplace is thrown upon it, for it went through the form of being a fact. The deeds of Monte Cristo, on the other hand, are legitimate fiction!

The prisoners found the air chamber just high enough for a man to stand in, and very dark; they lighted it with bits of candles purloined from the hospital. A colossal coal pile covered the grating at the end; and they found that in the other direction the chamber ran immediately beneath the lower tier of cells. This was what Marmaduke foretold, and their spirits rose confidently at this fresh instance of their leader's astuteness.

They worked at first with trembling eagerness, which disappeared as the occupation itself beneficently wore them out. The only opening was made through the floor of Marmaduke's cell, under the

bunk; it was through eighteen inches of cement and stone. A carpet-bag was used to cover the hole, which remained undiscovered, for by making a great show of neatness and industry they were allowed to care for their own cells. The other cells were tapped from below; a little crust of cement was left to be broken through when the tunnel should be finished and they were ready to fly. All the military prisoners were in the secret, but only those whose cells stood over the air chamber would be able to escape, and as Lockspur was assigned to Marmaduke's cell he was one of the envied half-dozen.

They were near the end of their work when Lockspur came. He brought them luck — a gusty storm. The day after his arrival they saw on the high windows the beat and flow of rain. Rain was what they wanted — a blinding and protracted storm which would force the dogs to keep their kennels and the sentries to seek the shelter of their boxes.

Lockspur was lying on his bunk, stretched in his customary comfortable attitude, smoking and telling stories; his rich, laughing voice could be heard far down the corridor. The cell was filled with officers and tobacco smoke; there were frequent bursts of noisy laughter; Colonel Vertrees sat in the door, smoothing the nails in his shoe with a piece of stone — a work of Penelope, for it was but a blind to the system of signals, by rapping, between those above and those in the works below.

Marmaduke descended to take his turn at the work.

He encountered a smell of fresh earth and strong tobacco. Colonel Upshaw sat on a pile of stones, his sleeves rolled up, pulling contentedly at his hideous old black pipe, to which he had clung through every vicissitude. A single candle lighted the scene. There were some bundles of civilian clothing, a strong rope made of the under side of bed-ticks, a stout grappling hook made of the poker of the hall stove, a few old case-knives, and a great pile of stones, mortar, and dirt — the debris of nearly a month's toil.

"Is there anyone in the hole?" asked Marmaduke.

Upshaw shook his head. "Look," said he, and he picked up a sample of dirt, much darker than the rest. "See? — ground-soil — grass roots. The job is done — the thing is finished, by ganney! I've arched her up with brick to keep any chance foot from breaking it down outside. And if anybody had told me we could get through ten feet of solid masonry, twelve feet of solider grouting, and six or eight feet of dirt, all inside of three weeks and five days, with nothing but some knives, a broken-handled shovel, and our fingers, I'd have set him down as somewhat of a liar and a fool. Ain't we about ready to clear out?"

"The job is done—the thing is finished, by ganney!"

CHAPTER XXII

A COPY OF UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

"IF WE had the money," said Marmaduke.

"By ganney," said Upshaw, "the money! I wonder if the Judge ever got those letters?"

"I think not," said Marmaduke.

"Now, I think maybe he did," said Upshaw. "And I think he thinks this place is as good a place for you as any, till the war's over."

"Possibly," said Marmaduke. "But money or no money, I mean to get out of here."

"I'll follow you blindfolded," said Upshaw, tossing his tobacco pouch to his chief. "Fill up. It's a poor heart that never rejoices."

"Right!" said Marmaduke, and the two friends sat down to a quiet smoke. Marmaduke smoked in the manner of Marse Jubal, that is to say, he smoked only upon occasion, and then he devoted his time to it.

Four taps sounded presently on the floor of the cell overhead. That signified, "Come out." Marmaduke brushed his clothes and hastily ascended.

"The Warden's looking all over the place for you," said Lockspur. "I told him you were busy on the *Memorial.*"

The *Memorial* was an eloquential document, addressed to the Federal Government, protesting against military prisoners being classed with felons and kept in convicts' quarters. No one supposed it would ever come to anything, but it gave him something to do. Marmaduke had drawn it up in his stateliest English, and from time to time he revised it and read it aloud.

"Did you wish to see me, Mr. Warden?"

"Yes. Where the dickens do you keep yourself?"

"I've been working on my *Memorial,*" said Marmaduke, pulling the manuscript out of his pocket. "Look here, you're a man of literary taste: I'd like to know what you think of it." And he thrust the document under the official's nose.

"Why, this is very fine," said the Warden, cordially, after reading the paper, and much gratified by the deference of the noted rebel. "Very well expressed, Colonel," he added, returning the *Memorial.* "But I am not surprised, for I had always heard you were as clever with the pen as with the saber."

"You flatter me, sir," said Marmaduke, gravely.

"Not at all," said the Warden. "But what I wanted to see you about was this — there was a woman here to see you."

"A woman, Mr. Warden?" Marmaduke's heart thrummed for a moment against his ribs, but his

face gave no sign. So far as he was concerned there was only one woman in the world, but the preposterous fancy that Diana Fortune might have come died before it was fully formed. "What did she want?" he asked.

"She wanted to save your soul," said the Warden. "My dear Colonel, whenever a man is put in jail for having killed other men, under any sensational and picturesque circumstances, there are always women who come to see him. They come for various reasons, but at the bottom of it all is womankind's undying admiration for the outlaw. There have been several women here to see you, but this woman — this lady, I should say — was different. She was a traveling representative of the Anti-Slavery Society. She told me to give you this book." And he placed in Marmaduke's hands a copy of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* "What do you think of it?"

"This is a fine book," said Marmaduke.

"What, you like it?" cried the other.

"It is," said Marmaduke, "a very fine book — a masterpiece."

"I never knew a Southern man to speak of it without swearing," the Warden said.

"That is because Southern men do not read it and know absolutely nothing about it. This book," said Marmaduke, putting the volume away under his arm and patting the palm of one hand with

the two first fingers of the other, "this book is not a criticism of Southern people — not at all, sir. It is a criticism of our 'peculiar institution' — which unfortunately does not *bear* criticism."

"Well, sir, for a rebel," said the Warden, "you have mighty reasonable ideas."

"Why, sir, I try to show a liberal spirit," said Marmaduke. "I shall take this book and look into it again, and perhaps pass on some of its virtue to my friends."

"That's a good idea," said the Warden, and walked away.

Marmaduke drew Upshaw into an unoccupied cell. "The knife, Dick!" he said tensely. "Let me have the knife! Stand to the door, and keep a lookout. The knife — quick!"

Uncle Tom's Cabin was bound in half-leather, with thick covers. These Marmaduke split open with his well-worn case-knife. The pasteboard had been carefully removed and two thin sheets of firm cardboard substituted. The re-binding had been expertly done, so there was no evidence of tampering. As the knife blade released the edges the covers bulged: Marmaduke dropped the knife and tore the sheets apart. United States currency notes of various denominations, pressed flatly together, filled the entire space between the sheets of cardboard. The two men exchanged quiet glances; and while Upshaw blocked the doorway with his bulk and

soberly pulled his moustache and blinked and nodded, Marmaduke counted the notes.

"Five hundred dollars. Go tell the faithful, Upshaw!" he cried. "It is the god from the machine. We leave tonight!"

When Upshaw was gone he took out of his pocket a card which he had found among the notes, and had hastily concealed. On one side was a street address in Richmond, Virginia, and on the other was this message:

God bring you back safe from the war!

DIANA.

CHAPTER XXIII

MORNING

AT MIDNIGHT when the deputy warden flashed his lantern into every cell successively, he saw, or thought he saw, which was just as well, all the military prisoners sleeping soundly in their bunks, with the blankets drawn over their heads.

The night was wearing on with furious and unremitting rain. Along the floor the prisoners had sprinkled coal, and when the deputy's footsteps, which he could not choose but make audible, were heard no more, six officers threw off their blankets. They were already dressed, and with a trembling care as great as a mother's with her infant, put some bundles of old shirts to bed in their places. It was to make this deception flawless that they had slept for weeks habitually with covered heads. Then, softly as might be they broke down the thin layer of cement covering the holes under their bunks, and cautiously slid into the air chamber below.

Marmaduke called the roll in a whisper: "Lockspur, Upshaw, Vertrees, Bullitt, McClung!" They were all there, and Marmaduke on hands and knees, led the way through the tunnel.

He thrilled with a sharp sense of relief when, on pushing up the bricks and sod, he felt the pouring rainstorm in his face. Each man as he emerged held his knife ready for desperate work, but the dogs did not show themselves. In the grateful blackness and splashing rain the men stood about the hole till the last one came up, and then, linking arms, that they might not lose each other, they sped across the yard in the protecting storm.

Several throws of the grappling hook were necessary before it caught the coping of the great wall. "She's bit," announced Upshaw, finally. Every foot of the rope had been tested up to his weight, and heavily knotted. They went up hand over hand; Marmaduke was the last to go, and when he was at the height of a dozen feet he heard underneath him the heavy whisk of animal feet and a sniff — a noise only half-suspicious, sleepy; it might have come at the end of a mighty canine yawn. Gaining the broad top of the wall, he drew the rope up; they quickly let themselves down on the other side. It was as they had expected — the ceaseless downpour kept the soldiers in their boxes — and here were the deserted streets, and they were free!

They changed their clothes in an alley, and immediately separated into two parties. Vertrees danced a few jigs under a gas light, kissed his hand recklessly to the towering prison, and with Bullitt and McClung disappeared in the rain and darkness.

"We'll stick together as close as thieves!" said Marmaduke.

The three went boldly to the railway station and bought their tickets just in time to take an accommodation train for the East. Lockspur had got a flask of Bourbon whiskey at a bar near the station, and filled his pockets with chicken sandwiches, which he and Upshaw were munching as they boarded the train. Marmaduke was too eager to think of eating. He pushed his way into the car and sitting down beside a stout German who wore the Federal uniform, engaged him vigorously in conversation, so that no one would think of asking his permit to travel. Upshaw got deep into a newspaper, and Lockspur curled up in his seat with his hat over his face and pretended to sleep.

It was not yet day when the train rolled at a swift rate toward a small city on the Ohio River. "I think we had better not make the acquaintance of the provost guards," said Marmaduke. "We'll take to the woods."

"She's going too fast," said Upshaw.

"We'll stop her," said Marmaduke, decisively. He threw his weight on the bell-cord, and then sprang to the brake on the rear platform. As the bumpers and couplers crashed he struck the ground at a run, and stumbled against Lockspur and Upshaw, who had alighted from the front.

They ran at once into the dripping woods; it was

very dark, but when they emerged from the timber they could make out an open field before them, and stars overhead. It had ceased raining.

Sometimes running, sometimes walking swiftly, they pushed forward through the darkness, through woods, through newly ploughed fields.

Upshaw finally checked the pace. "Here, hold up!" he panted. "Damned if I'll run any more for anybody!"

Marmaduke sniffed the air luxuriously. "I smell wild-grape blossoms," he said, and sniffed again.

"Elder blooms, too! We must be near the big river. Why, by Christopher, there it is! Look!"

The Ohio River lay before them, with stars in it.

"Day's a-breaking," said Marmaduke. "How much time has passed, Dick, without a daybreak for you and me? I'm surprised at you fellows! Why ain't you excited? Smell the smell of things! — bullweed and willow down by the bank — I can't see 'em, but I know they are there! It's like old Tennessee! Tell me, Lockspur, did you never step out upon the bank of the Tennessee River at peep o' day — oh, can't you try to be men, and wake up and realize that — realize that — that *day's a-breaking?* The dawn is coming, my old war horses, with purple and gold. And we are free! Good Lord! good Lord! how good it is!"

"I don't see much break yet," said Lockspur,

with the resentment of a man who feels left out of something. "Where did he get his?"

Marmaduke laughed, so happily and persistently that Lockspur flung a clod at him.

"Oh, you great fool!" cried Marmaduke, and laughed again.

"He is not drunk, or I'd smell the stuff," said Upshaw, having judiciously considered the matter. "He has gone mad."

"Right!" cried Marmaduke. "I am beside myself. This taste of liberty turns my head. Besides, I am in love — in love with life, with myself, with destiny! I am in love with the sunrise! Why, man, I never saw the sun rise before!"

"Here, stop that mouth with one of these sandwiches," said Upshaw.

"Oh, have you still got sandwiches? Sandwiches — chicken sandwiches, by Christopher, and the sunrise to see. Let us sit down, and eat meat and bread, and see the sun rise!"

In the nearby woodland the whippoorwills kept up a steady whistling, with the wet sweetness of the leaves in their note. The three men waited and up a steady whistling, with the wet sweetness of the suffusing daybreak, from that in which the darkness dominated and the morning star prevailed, to that in which these failed. From afar, and farther, came clarion crowings. The clouds grew dove-colored; the whippoorwills sang continuously; and

through the long, solemn twilight of grayness and waiting and vast loneliness, the birds, one by one, began to sing. It was as in an orchestra, where performers successively enter and begin to play — song-sparrow, wood-thrush, oriole, cardinal, wren and cat-bird, and all the gurgling company of warblers. From across the still stream came the blows of a man chopping wood.

The stars faded slowly. They became able to distinguish things — dewy gray fields, far-off barns with roofs dark from the rain over night, wide belts of corn-fields and wheat, and white patches of ox-eye daisies under a mist, and the woods beyond, and the river with its trailing vapors and ineffable odors. The East became blue and scarlet. As the dawn progressed the bird music became a continuous crash — thrillings, pipings and twitterings, in which the quail and the turtle-dove joined.

Ravishing coolness came out of the hollows of the rain-soaked woods, from the scented earth, from the river flowing silent and slow — not merely fresh and sweet, but rank, heady and intoxicating.

It had the flowering wild-rose in it, and the tang of wet willows, and smacked of springs and creeks. Marmaduke stopped eating at times to look about and listen and take deep draughts of the sweet air. The whippoorwills ceased, almost abruptly. "Well, that was a good feast, gentlemen," said Marmaduke. "No, no liquor, thanks. Save that liquor.

What does a man want with whiskey when he's already drunk with liberty?"

The thump of wooden oarlocks was heard, and an aged negro fisherman appeared, pulling slowly along the bank.

"O Jim!" cried the eager Marmaduke. "Hey, Charlie! Uncle Tom! Old Cicero! Pluto! Pompey! O you old black Stygian ferryman — Charon! Come here! A silver dollar to row us over the river!"

They stepped gaily aboard. Upshaw sat smoking in the stern, with Lockspur between his knees; Marmaduke pushed off and sat in the bow. The old negro began pulling feebly and slowly toward the other shore.

"Any danger of running into rebels over there?" asked Marmaduke.

The negro chuckled. "I dunno, boss," he said. "Not much, I reckon. Too many Linkern gunboats patterrollin' dis river. Dar's one now." He nodded toward a cloud of smoke upon the surface of the Ohio, now lit by the rising sun.

"She's kicking up some big waves," said Upshaw.

"Better pull across ahead of her," said Lockspur sharply.

The negro made no reply; his face became sullen; he continued to row with ineffectual strokes.

"Let me take the oars," said Marmaduke, gently.

Something in his voice made the negro turn and look at him; then without a word he shipped the oars and made way.

"Sit quiet," said Marmaduke. He dipped the blades in the water, and the boat sprang forward. The negro crouched in the bow, rolling his eyes at the faces of his three passengers. Upshaw kept on smoking. Marmaduke delivered long powerful strokes that sent the skiff surging swiftly through the water: now they were in midstream, now they were in the shadow of the maples on the other shore; the boat suddenly grounded on a shoal.

"Jump!" cried Marmaduke; he dropped a dollar in the boat as he leaped into the river. The others came plunging after him as he splashed through the shallows. A round ball from the gunboat skipped the surface of the water behind them as they scrambled up the bank. The shot was not repeated; the vessel kept to the channel and held her course down the stream.

And meanwhile the fugitives broke through the tangled undergrowth and plunged joyously into the deep woods of the Virginia shore.

CHAPTER XXIV

MARMADUKE IN RICHMOND

THE three friends reached the Confederate capital after a weary and perilous journey. Their way led them by the banks of the Kanawha and up through the wild mountain gorges of New River, in West Virginia. For the most part they traveled afoot, suffering much danger and discomfort, but so far as Marmaduke was concerned that mid-summer flight through the Virginias was altogether a joyous experience. Its hardships had no effect upon his spirits; danger was a bagatelle; he was going to Richmond, by Christopher! He would lie down at night in the woods, footsore and supperless, and wake in the morning to rally his hungry companions with unending foolery; his gaiety was irrepressible, and when he played the part of cattle buyer, in which character he chose to travel, he would haggle about the price with such eager rapacity, such a whirl of instances and arguments, that both Lockspur and Upshaw forgot, at times, that it was all a windy imposition.

With the mountains behind them they fared pleasantly; they had reached unadulterated Confederate territory. Thenceforward they met with great

kindness everywhere, and were made much of, and one day in the middle of June they came into the city on the train.

It was late afternoon when they arrived. Inside of an hour Marmaduke had secured a change of clothes, supped with Upshaw and Lockspur at the Spottswood Hotel, and leaving his friends pledging the health of new-found comrades at the bar, he started out to find Diana Fortune. The address on the card was still legible; the card itself was somewhat the worse for wear and tear. It had been soaked with rain and worn with much handling; he had carried it in his pocket as a talisman.

He strode swiftly, high-hearted and elate. It was a fine afternoon, notably cool for June, with fluid amber sunshine that gave a pictorial vividness to everything it touched; it stained with gold the trees and houses and the faces and fingers of the people in the streets; it gleamed from the spokes of rolling carriages and the trappings of the horses and the gold braid of the officers. Church spires and the columns of the Virginia capitol stood out in mellow glory; Crawford's heroic statue of Washington, the great republican, rode serenely upon the sky, oblivious of the passing crisis in the life of the great republic. It was the high tide of the Confederacy, whose army in Virginia had known nothing but victory. A feeling of success was in the streets, which even the hobbling cripples shared; there were unnum-

bered aching hearts in Richmond and desolate homes, but these were beneath the surface. The city was all a-flutter with happy expectation, for Lee and his great army had crossed the Potomac with the bands playing, to carry the war into the North.

Marmaduke was wholly charmed with Richmond. He liked the softly modulated voices of the people, which kept through generations of good-breeding the old-time richness of the Virginia speech. He had never been in Virginia before, and almost every woman's voice he heard in the street made him turn, thinking it was Diana's. He wondered why there should be so many voices like hers there, until he realized that the similarity was merely in the accent, the broad *a*'s, and the pleasing idiom, which she had acquired in her school days in Richmond. They all said "pahss" and "ahftah" and "right much" with the same mellow intonation that he remembered so well. Therefore he liked them, and he liked, too, the affable manners of the Richmond folk, who showed him much courtesy. He did not realize how much of their cordiality and grace was but a reflection of his own, nor what a striking figure he himself presented as he quested along the street, eager, pleased and smiling, for the house where Diana Fortune lived.

A tall young lady answered his ring at the door-bell. Marmaduke asked for Mr. Fortune.

"Mr. Fortune is not in the city, sir," she said.

"Is Miss Diana here?"

"No, sir."

"She lives here, does she not?"

The young lady's manner was guarded. "At times — yes."

"She is out of town?"

"Yes."

"Do you know when she will return?"

"No, I do not, sir."

Marmaduke stood for a moment in dull silence, sustaining without expression the shock of a disappointment against which he had not fortified himself in the least degree.

"I had hoped to see her," he said presently. "Can you give me any information about her?"

"I am sorry that I am not in position to do so," said the girl. She was a graceful, straight-browed creature with gentle eyes which became suddenly luminous. "Oh, I know who you are!" she cried. "You are Diana's — you are Colonel Marmaduke, of Tennessee! And I have just been reading about you in the *Dispatch*!"

Hero worship was the order of the day. The story of Marmaduke's escape had run before him; the Richmond papers had found space to print it with a notable variety of detail and invention, and so Marmaduke found himself regarded as a hero even in the Confederate capital, where heroes were rather numerous.

The young woman looked up at the tall officer with ingenuous interest. This interest, however, was kindled less by the thought of his soldierly achievements than by the fact that he was Diana's friend. "It was very dense of me not to have known immediately who you were," she said. "I am Helen Page, you know?" The rising inflection as she announced her name implied that it must be familiar to him. He had never heard the name. To admit this would be to confess how little he knew of Diana; he forced himself past the necessity of doing so by eagerly taking her hand. "For heaven's sake, Miss Page, tell me all about her!" he implored.

She asked him into the house. "In the first place, you know about her work, of course?"

"Her work? What work? No, I do not."

"Oh, then I can't tell you!"

"You can't tell me? Well, by Christopher, what would be the use of telling me if I did know?"

Miss Page laughed. "I have no doubt about your identity now!" she declared. "Diana said that if a man came asking for her and swore by Christopher, I could trust him — it was you! But indeed it is very little I can tell you about her, Colonel Marmaduke," she added, seriously. "She wished to remain here, and continue her work in the government service, but Mr. Fortune had to go back to Tennessee last week and he made her go with him."

Marmaduke was silent. Under other circum-

stances he would have liked to sit and talk with Diana's friend, but his disappointment sat upon him heavily, his dumb devils possessed him, and he knew that he must go.

"You are going south, too, I suppose," said Miss Page, as he rose.

"That will be as the War Department wills it," he said. "I will know tomorrow." And he took his leave with many kind words of gratitude and courtesy.

There came a crimson flare of sunset; he saw again the statue of Washington poised against the sky, and the streets were growing populous with soldiers and civilians. Out of the capitol grounds came Mr. Jefferson Davis, riding a fine horse, attended by a brilliant company of officers and aides; the crowd cheered; a band struck up, and the day ended with a brave theatrical effect, stirring to behold.

But there was no thrill in it for Marmaduke; there was no charm in Richmond now. Instead he saw merely the streets of a strange city, unsuggestive and disenchanted.

He went the next day to the War Department. With this institution his understanding had never been very happy. He had disobeyed orders more than once, he had shown a disposition to be independent, but worst of all he had manifested no

respect for the forms and blanks of the Richmond war office. It was a case of mutual misunderstanding, with righteous disapprobation on the part of the bureaucracy, and lordly contempt on the part of the young partisan, who preferred fighting to bookkeeping. For these faults he was punished. Methodical mediocrities and circumspect nonentities became major-generals, but Henry Marmaduke, for all his fiery record of soldiership, retained the modest rank of colonel.

Nevertheless he met with some cordiality at the War Department. In particular there was one proud old turkey-cock of high rank and station who took him by the hand and greeted him with a profane paraffle of compliment. "*You* are Henry Marmaduke? Hang it, sir, I thought Marmaduke was a grizzly old guerilla! You, sir — why, you are a young man, sir — and a gentleman, by gad! You look like my son, sir — I lost him at Manassas. What do you want?"

"I should like reassignment to my old command, sir, or at least such fragments of it as may yet exist."

"Your old command!" The General's words came like growling thunder through his great gray moustache. "Your command, sir, is unknown in the records of this office! What have you got to say to that, sir?"

"I should regard that statement, sir, as a species

of hyperbole," said Marmaduke, striving to control a sudden anger.

The old officer's eyes twinkled as he turned to the Secretary of War, who had just entered. "What shall we do with this young fellow? Here's this young Marmaduke — this turbulent Hotspur of the West — he's out of a job. We must treat him right, Mr. Seddon — he's a damned good soldier, sir!"

"That matter should be referred, of course, to his departmental commander, for his recommendation," said the Secretary. "Meanwhile it might be well to send Colonel Marmaduke out on detached duty with the Army of Northern Virginia. He might learn a thing or two about discipline." And with a cold smile the Secretary passed on.

So it was ordered. Three days later, in company with Upshaw and Lockspur, Marmaduke left the city to catch up with Stuart's Cavalry, then riding and fighting on the flank of Lee's army in its bold invasion of the North.

CHAPTER XXV

THE WHEAT FIELDS OF THE NORTH

JULY had come to Pennsylvania, purple and huge and hot. To Pennsylvania, too, with miles upon miles of wagon trains, had come the three great infantry corps of the Southern army — as fit a force, for all its rags and tatters, as ever took up a march. They had separately crossed the boundaries of this angry and militant state; like three grim tigers that had broken in, they crawled and ran upon the hills. Their enemy was there, too, his corps segregated among the valley towns, the patient and powerful Army of the Potomac.

And one morning a fraction in gray ran headlong into a fraction in blue in the meadows through which a turnpike runs northward from a little town near the southern border.

It was a hot morning, with a drooping veil of vapors, and the fighting was smart and savage, and the crackling rifles aroused the rolling cannon. And upon this, hurrying from the Cumberland valley in the west and the Susquehanna in the east, and out from the Pipe Creek highlands in the south, with tossing colors and rumbling guns, trampling the highways into puffing dust, the thundering armies

came, converging for momentous duel, here, where they had not thought to meet, by this little town.

How that first day's fighting went, what soldiers and leaders were shot down under both flags, and how at length, outnumbered, one Federal corps gave way, while a second, its right uncovered by the retreat of the first, its front hotly pressed by the final assault of the Confederates, abandoned the whole of their position to the Southerners, and swinging into column fell back through the town upon the ridge beyond where they took up substantially the remarkable position they never yielded; and how, next day the tigerish grapple was renewed — it is all told with more or less accuracy in hundreds of history books — and this is but a tale.

Colonel Marmaduke and Dr. Lockspur, very dusty and hungry, rode down the turnpike into the town on the night of July the second, at nine o'clock. Colonel Upshaw had gone on with the infantry, but Marmaduke and Lockspur had stayed to watch the cavalry fighting. That day they had seen an almost hand-to-hand contest of Stuart's men with the enemy's horse. In the afternoon the frightful rumbling of the distant infantry battle seemed to die away, only to break out with greater fury nearer at hand. It continually increased as they drew on; the sun went down and the moon and stars were shining, but the crash and snarl continued. As the riders drew nearer to the seat of these ominous bombilations

they could hear, blended and far-reaching, a murmurous intermittent clamor of voices; they could even distinguish the husky notes of shells, and see the rocket-like trails of fire; they could make out the outline of the rugged hills by the blinking flames of cannon and muskets, and there was a glare from the town beyond. The battle front presented a long irregular array of lights, very red and awful in the moonlight.

As they rode on toward this theater of thunder and mortality a certain demoniac eagerness possessed both the horsemen; they spurred to a wild gallop.

Almost instantly the rolling thunder stopped. The firing ceased on hill and valley, and the bursting shells were seen no more. For the night at least, the rapacious guns had their fill of the costly meat. The silence was almost as terrible.

"What was it?" asked Marmaduke. "A success?"

"I hear no yelling," said Lockspur. "It's a tie, I reckon."

Crossing a creek they saw both banks lined with Confederate soldiers, chiefly injured men who were able to walk, washing and tying up hands, arms, legs and heads, with considerable profanity, much laughter and an undertone of groaning; the horses refused the water. Reaching the town they found it congested with troops, Alabamians, Georgians, and

North Carolinians, cooking and eating in the streets. The air was thick with pungent smoke from the battlefields and the mess fires; a warm rank odor of sweat and blood prevailed. The babble and din was infernal; there was a crush of horses and ambulances, an unceasing stream of wounded soldiers, some on stretchers, some supported by their comrades; yet the dominant expression seemed recklessly cheerful.

"Ramseur's Brigade, sir, Rodes' Division, Ewell's Corps," said a merry, blustering Tarheel, in answer to Marmaduke's question as to what troops these were. He came out victor in a wrangle over a piece of half-raw pork. His head was enveloped in a bandage, but his appetite was apparently good. "Army headquarters? Let me see. Oh!" He pointed with his piece of meat. "Just follow this street till you come to the end of it, and then bear to the right. 'Bout a half out."

"It's three-quarters," said another.

"Aw, who asked you? — You can't miss it, sir," said the first soldier, falling back and saluting as he saw the horseman's stars.

"By ganney!" came from one who patiently urged his horse through the ruck; his big shoulders and the folds of his clothing were thick-layered with dust, and his face wore its old-time familiar smile of solid well-being.

"Aye, ganney!" answered Marmaduke, rejoiced

to hear that mighty voice again. "Upshaw, well met!"

Their old friend seemed greatly pleased with the big battle that was going on; he was delighted with its magnitude and spectacular interest. "I'll show you army headquarters, if that's what you want," he said. "I'm hob-a-nob with all the top-knots — Hill, Longstreet, and the others. Haven't met your Uncle Robert, have you?"

"I knew him in the army," said Lockspur.

"Well," said Upshaw, "he's a new idea to me. I had read about such men. He's been hammering that army for two days with fire and iron, and if you thought it wasn't a spang-up fighting army you thought wrong. But he has lashed it back till it lies there curled up with its bristles out on those hills, a natural fortification. It's going to be murder tomorrow, for the old man is full of fight, and won't hear of turning their left, and so on. I don't say he can drive them, I don't say that he can't; but if he doesn't, gentlemen, it will be because no man can!"

It was a long speech for Upshaw; even so taciturn a man as he was stirred to excited speech by that atmosphere of strenuous valor and bloody death, and the presence of the huge hostile armies resting from their cataclysmic grapple.

They found army headquarters filled with staff and general officers from all parts of the field. Among them was a gentle-voiced man in a plain and

somewhat faded service suit, who seemed vigorously occupied.

"Ah, Hill," said he, greeting an officer who had entered just before them, "it's all right, Hill! — everything is all right! I count the day a success. We can break them up tomorrow. These people are doing better fighting than they ever did before, though. Where is Stuart? Does anyone know?"

"General Stuart has just arrived on the field, sir," said Marmaduke.

The commanding general gave him a quick, interested glance.

"General Lee, Colonel Marmaduke, of the Department of the West," said one of the staff officers.

"Ah?" Lee extended his hand. "You western fellows are doing wonderful things. What's this I hear of you turning miner and sapper? We are glad to have you with us, Colonel. And here's Stuart already."

The noted Virginia cavalryman entered the room with his wonted vigorous stride; he was a low-statured man, ruddy and bearded, with twinkling blue eyes. "How greatly I have missed you!" said General Lee. "I suspect you have had bloody work, Stuart — bloody, bloody work! But I was just saying it is all well — everything is well!"

There was an aroma of cigars and a general suggestion of brilliancy and hope. Outside, the fences

were lined with officers, couriers, orderlies and a few men in civilian dress, talking over the events of the day, some with languor, some with the dull bitterness of men who had seen friends killed, and others with happy enthusiasm.

There was a ceaseless coming and going of officers and couriers. A general officer, coatless, his sleeves rolled up, his gray flannel shirt open at the neck, dashed up and dismounted; then observing the crowded condition of headquarters, he turned impatiently away, drawing off his reeking gauntlets. Lockspur drew near to him and they fell into talk.

"I was in that charge down there on the right this evening," said he, biting a cigar. "It was simply ungodly fire and murder among the rocks. The fighting was the most desperate I have ever seen. There was a wheatfield and a peach orchard — my soul, what a pity, what a pity! There are thousands of dead men down there now — thousands."

He led Lockspur a little way down the road. "I want to show you the place called Round Top. That's it, looming up lonesome-like down there, those highest, furthest lights — it's about three miles off to the south. It's the key to the position. I remember when I was a boy, Doctor, I traveled along the Emmetsburg road, and the stage stopped at night near that mountain — it's a rugged, rocky, desolate place — and it rose up there so gloomy and dominating that I was frightened. It's enough to

frighten anybody now — there are thousands of dead men lying scattered among the rocks — thousands!"

"How far is it, did you say?" some one said.

"About three miles."

"And how far is it to our left?"

"Two or three."

"That means a solid battlefront five miles long."

"Fully," said the officer.

In spite of the tender mildness of the night, a nervous cold shiver came over Lockspur. The grim immensity of this conflict of a houseless great city of men was appalling: the familiar moonlight itself was tinged with terrifying suggestions. The quiver of unrest followed him and fought with his natural drowsiness when he sought the friendly bivouac of the Tennessee infantry. He found them talkative and vengeful. They had lost heavily in the first day's fight; their brigadier was a prisoner; they had bit their nails all day in the reserves. And on the morrow, though they knew it not, they were to join the Virginians and Carolinians in a supreme charge of such sacrificial splendor that its purpose seems but to remind the world once more that a soldier's business is to do with his utmost whatever thing he is bid.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE CHARGE

EXCEPT for an elusive murmur, the field that noon was silent. The growl of the guns had stopped. Not a shot echoed.

Between the ridges lay the shallow valley, with its fields of wheat stubble, its woods and rocks, and quiet intersecting roads, blinking in the vertical pour of the sun. The immense July sky stretched far with flakes of down, and close beneath them the trees gathered their broods of shadow.

Marmaduke rode to a height near the center, and murmured to himself in sharp surprise at the Titanic preparations. Along Seminary Ridge, partly hid from the enemy by a skirt of woods, their muzzles trained across the valley upon the parallel ridge, an almost unbroken array of Confederate cannon, brass and iron, blinked and shimmered in the hot perspective for miles.

He rode rapidly along the lines.

The artillerymen were eating their rations in the stinging sun; a few were tinkering with the guns; many lounged, smoking and talking, in the shade of the trees. On the western slope the infantry were getting into position.

"There," said an artillery officer, pointing to the enemy's center, "there is where the attack is to be delivered."

"When does the artillery open?"

"There will be two signal guns shortly from the Washington artillery."

The divisions behind the crest were forming so as to converge over different ground upon the same point of attack. They were dusty and dirty; they knew where they had to go, and they did not seem to care.

Now the formation of the column of attack was in three divisions, commanded — it is good to mention gallant names — by Pickett, Pettigrew, and Trimble. The right of the column was Pickett's. His was a division of Longstreet's famous corps; their men were fresh on the field, and they were all Virginians; they numbered near five thousand men. On the left was Pettigrew, with his North Carolinians, Tennesseeans, and Mississippians. Besides these there were other brigades disposed to cover his advance.

"There's the signal gun!" said the artilleryman. "You are a little in the way, sir." The single sharp report crashed up and down the valley. Three miles of cannoneers sprang to their pieces. A second puff of smoke appeared, but the echoes of the shot were lost.

For consentaneously, as though some mighty

hand had struck upon all the keys of some stupendous organ, with a bursting thunder like falling mountains, with crash and boom welded upon shriek and roar, the thrilling and horrible bellow of the cannonade began. Down the whole length of Seminary Ridge it ran, a colossal eruption of fire and deafening thunder — and from Cemetery Hill to Round Top, the angry guns of the Republic, delaying not, belched their superior reply.

The brown earth trembled under the feet of the armies. In the valley, and rising above the rocking batteries, dense stinking clouds fell, and rose, and sifted; the pungent pall made a kind of twilight, in which the throats of the guns glared brightly. The sky was filled with multisonous shells, wildly screaming, protesting huskily and bursting; above the rolling of Parrott and Napoleon could be heard the raging ululation of the rifled Whitworths. The sunlight was blackened. The trees no longer cast any shadows.

"Gad, the ball has opened now!" cried Lockspur in Marmaduke's ear; his blue eyes were dilated darkly behind his glasses with solemn delight, and he wanted to talk, but Marmaduke did not care for a shouted dialogue.

Toward mid-afternoon the fire slackened on the Federal side. The cause was, they feared an attack under cover of their own smoke; but the Confederates took it for a sign of destruction and put forth

all their efforts, and the chief of artillery wrote to Pickett: "For God's sake, come quick, or my ammunition won't let me support you."

And Pickett went to his corps commander, a noted lieutenant-general, who, his counsels rejected, dawdled in acute irresolution. "General, shall I advance?"

The other turned his face away, with a barely perceptible nod.

"Sir," said General Pickett, saluting, "I shall move forward!"

And then — ah, the superb stretches of gray ranks and shining bayonets! Ah, blood that burns at the rhythmic blink of the serried ranks! Was ever a sad mistake more beautifully made? With quick, elastic stép, and in faultless formation, the far-sweeping lines of infantry burst swiftly over the hill. And at the front rode Pickett himself, jaunty, careless and confident, his long red hair curling to his collar, his cap's visor in his eyes.

And then on the left, stretching further than the eye could see, another and greater gray line emerged suddenly from the fringe of woods.

"Here they come! It looks like Hill's entire corps!" cried Lockspur. "Oh, you gray-backed beauties! Gad, you can hear the whisk of their breeches' legs! And look at the batteries going in!"

But Marmaduke was watching the splendid masses of the infantry, as swiftly and steadily they

debouched on that valley of death. Their red battle-flags fluttering, a mile of men on shelterless ground, they pressed on and on, till the Federal guns broke out upon them with flame and fulmination; the enemy's entire position was enveloped in roaring fire. As the hot iron struck the advancing ranks they were seen to quiver as if breathed upon by some strangling breath; deep intervals showed clear and clean. They halted for a moment, closed in and dressed, and went on to where the Emmetsburg road traversed the valley. They were now in taste of solid shot; cannister raked them, grape cut them down; and yet they pushed on, undismayed. When they came to the road the lifting smoke showed whole regiments of fallen; the enemy slew them with his muskets. But the column, hooking together, surmounted the first fence and tumbled flat in the road. General Garnett, bloodied, bowed to his horse's mane, rode along the lines for a space of time, and died. The column broke over the second fence, which was dismantled by the fire, its boards perforated with bullets like a sieve, and as they struck the ground the rolling of the rifles on the hills before them waxed to an appalling fury. They halted but for a moment in the leaden hail, and then with a wild shout that sounded through the valley over the uproar, they sprang forward and upward, through fire and smoke and sheets of iron and lead, with snapping colors and flashing bayonets, firing, thrust-

ing, striking in the faces of the gallant defenders of those hills — up to immortal glory and a wall of stone!

"Glory to God!" cried Lockspur. "I have seen a great thing! A success! A success! A complete success!"

The smoke cut off further view of the grapple. Marmaduke's face moved strangely. He sprang suddenly to his horse.

"Now, where are you going?" roared Lockspur. "Keep out of that! You will die!"

No soldier could witness that assault without burning to be in it. Marmaduke found himself galloping wildly in the wake of the attacking column. The road he crossed was filled with the fallen. They writhed or crawled, or lay moveless as the dust; there were short, sharp shrieks. He saw Garnett covered with dust, dead beside his mangled horse. A little way beyond a company of what seemed to be stragglers lay in close order, out of all possible cover. The officer commanding seemed undecided as to whether he would advance or retreat. "Why don't you move your men?" shouted Marmaduke, forgetting that he was not commanding on this field.

"They are dead, sir," was the answer.

The valley was terribly littered. Dirt flew in Marmaduke's face from the spitting bullets; the ground seemed to work with them.

Gray shapes sped past him in the dust and smoke.

"Just Heaven — has that attack failed?" he moaned. It seemed so. There was no cheering. The fierce battlecry that announced a Confederate success was wanting. The ridge before him was yet roaring and blazing.

And then it was that he met a man out of his senses, and the sight of him made his heart sick. He came on foot, dressed in an officer's blue frock coat, with a scarlet stripe down his trousers leg; he wore a sword and scabbard by his side; there was a strange, expectant smile on his eager, handsome face, and he was firing with a pair of revolvers right and left.

Of a sudden he pitched forward flat on his face, and Marmaduke, springing down, lifted him upon the saddle, and remounting, turned his horse's head to the rear.

More soldiers, with a few battle flags, streamed past him, retreating across the shrieking plain.

He met Lockspur, and shouted to him to go back. "There is nothing more to be seen or done! Go back!"

"Is the whole line repulsed?"

"It is destroyed."

"What have you got there?"

Marmaduke turned the white face.

"Romilly!" cried Lockspur. "Is he dead?"

"I don't know," said Marmaduke, struggling

with his horse, which was rearing from a bullet wound in his flank.

They galloped out of the valley as fast as their horses would go.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE NIGHT AFTER THE BATTLE

WHEN the sun went down in crimson and gold on that field of blood, the July night beleaguered the two armies sitting horribly shattered on the hills they had held that morning. The one was exultant, sure alike of its strength and position and valor; and the other, its morale unbroken, scarcely realized that, for the first time, it had received a calamitous repulse.

Romilly was not dead, but he was unconscious, and Dr. Lockspur examined him carefully. "I can't do anything for him," he said. "He is shot in several places, and he is bleeding internally. He has no pulse."

Marmaduke followed him out of the tent. "No chance at all, Jack?"

"Oh, no. He will die before morning," said Lockspur. "But, Marmaduke, if you'd like some of the other doctors to see him — "

Marmaduke made a negative gesture with his palm, and Lockspur, after giving a few simple directions, hurried away, for he had been pressed into service.

Marmaduke re-entered the tent, shaded the sput-

tering candle so that its light would not strike the patient's eyes, and sat down beside him. He was breathing slowly and irregularly, and he stirred a little.

"Romilly?"

He received no response.

He had seen many comrades die — so many that he had become in a degree enured to it; it was a part of his trade, and he had discovered that grief itself is often but a superficial thing. But Romilly's friendship was the noblest he had ever known; the mystery and pity of this last hour of his clutched cruelly at his heart; his lips were dry and he could not speak. He moved away, and presently went out to Upshaw, who was sitting with his pipe in the trodden grass. The field was strong with the odor of bruised pennyroyal.

They talked in low voices; now and then they would go in to see Romilly.

Past midnight Lockspur came back, bringing a bite of lunch, for none of them had eaten supper. He went in to Romilly, and when he came out again he blew his nose softly.

"It's a strange thing to me," said Upshaw. "Strange thing." He cleared his throat as if to continue speaking, and remained silent.

"Do you mean it is singular," said the Doctor, "that Marmaduke should find him?"

"No, that isn't at all singular. I've met about

everybody I ever knew, here — it seems to me," said Marmaduke.

"I wasn't thinking of that," said Upshaw.

"You were wondering," said Marmaduke, "why I should find him alone, far out of their lines, with a pistol in each hand."

Upshaw assented.

"He was firing east and west," said Marmaduke.

All three were silent, each thinking that which none could express, till Marmaduke spoke. "We may as well have an understanding; I'd hate to have his folks know." He paused a moment and went on: "Those people made no effort to pursue. And a battery officer doesn't leave his guns and attack a whole retreating army division, with enemies in front of him, behind him, and all around him, firing at everybody and everything he sees, single-handed, unless — "

He paused, and then went on: "Unless it is his fixed intention to die."

"He deliberately sought certain death," said Upshaw. "I knew that when I heard where you found him."

"Well," said Lockspur, "it is with us to say — and we needn't say."

"That was why I spoke of it, it must go no further," said Marmaduke. He rose and looked into the tent. "Poor Romilly!" he said. "Poor — " He turned and walked quickly away.

When he returned he had a canteen of cold spring water, with which he saturated cloths and applied them to Romilly's head, changing them as often as they became warm. Once the patient opened his eyes.

Marmaduke held the canteen to his lips; he drank a little, mechanically.

"Don't you know me, Romilly? I am Marmaduke."

"Yes, yes, yes," he said. "Yes, yes, yes." But it was clear that he knew nothing. His breathing grew difficult, he turned his face into the blanket. Upshaw emptied his pipe, Lockspur threw down his cigar: they entered the tent at a word from Marmaduke, and stood around in silence . . .

All the next day the army lay in position, neither inviting nor deprecating attack. The black skies broke in thunder and javelin rain; the downpour was incessant through the darkling afternoon, during which thousands of wagons, ambulances and gun carriages assembled in confused acreage, whipped and stormbeaten, along the Cashtown road. This train, which represented the entire transportation of the Army of Northern Virginia, uncoiled to a length of twenty miles in the blinding rain, in the direction of Virginia. There were in it many thousands of wounded men, there was no stay nor stop, but a continuous rolling onward in the pounding storm — with the crack of whips, the shrieks of men who

begged wildly for quick death — on, on, in the pitiless necessity of escape.

But Romilly was not in that rolling horror. He was given a soldier's burial on the slope of Seminary Ridge, and his three friends, weary, wet and muddy, came back from the funeral in something of a hurry, for the cavalry was ready for flight. They stopped to put his personal effects together. There was not much in all — his sword and scabbard, his watch, a slender packet of notes and letters, a wallet containing a little money, and a ring, engraved, "Cristina."

Upshaw examined the ring carefully. "Cristina," he said, and swore softly, his pipe in his teeth.

"Must be an engagement ring," said Lockspur. "Here's some letters — interesting letters, too. All signed, 'Cristina!'"

"Don't read them, Lockspur," said Marmaduke.

"I read one of them clear through, before I realized what I was doing. He must have been wild about her — and she simply threw him. Wish I could read 'em all. Beats any novel I ever read. Shall I burn 'em?"

"By all means," said Marmaduke.

"You keep the ring, Henry," said Lockspur, "just to remember him by." And he passed the letters over to Upshaw, who sat by the mess fire. "Hard to believe, somehow," Upshaw said, burn-

ing them one by one. "Poor devil! Think of it!—just a damned *woman!*"

That night, in flash and storm and thunder, the Southern Army moved, turning its back to the hills upon which the lightning flickered and the rain fell —the impregnable hills which Heaven had set as a bastion, by which a valorous army might save the Union.

"Say, Sarge," said a soldier of Virginia, "what name will all this killin' go by?"

"The Battle of Gettysburg," said the Sergeant. "Close up! Close up!"

CHAPTER XXVIII

MARMADUKE RETURNS TO EAGLE BEND

IT WAS late in July when Marmaduke, Upshaw and Lockspur reached Spanishburg. The latter part of the journey was made with great caution, for much territory in Tennessee was in the hands of the Federals. The officers took turns in riding in the cab with the engineer, Windy Marquis, a quondam stagedriver, well known to the three friends as a lively and resolute character. Mr. Marquis was a thick-set man, with a purple face, an intolerable loud voice, and eyes that with constant staring at the track ahead seemed to have started from their sockets; the vulgar called him pop-eyed. He fain would join the cavalry and follow Marmaduke, but he could never quite make up his mind to forego the pleasures of railroading, an equally adventurous and even more hazardous pursuit. He spoke of his engine as if it were a horse, or rather a mare, possessed of uncertain temper and vicious traits; sometimes he bullied her and at times he seemed afraid of her, but at all times he exacted of the battered old machine a strict obedience to orders. Once, as they neared Spanishburg, there came a rain of bullets from bushwhackers in the woods, and Marmaduke

saw ahead an obstruction built of cross ties. He pointed to it, but Mr. Marquis, stooping low, with a fixed glare in his protuberant eyes, pulled the throttle wide; the pile of timbers was shattered into kindling. The danger was over in a moment; the rocking train was still on the track, and Windy Marquis was beaming and gloating over his engine, in strange terms of endearment. He called her his good old wench, his turtle-dove, his spavined old she-devil, and many another curious fond name I may not render here. Then, noticing that Marmaduke was a trifle pale, he shouted: "By gravy, Colonel, I believe you was skeered!"

"By gravy, I was," said Marmaduke.

"Well, every man to his trade!" roared Windy. "I tuck notice you didn't try to dodge them bullets, like I done!"

It was a practice of Mr. Marquis, following his old custom as stagedriver, to dash into important railway stations at a wildly accelerated speed. He made an especially handsome finish as he thundered into Spanishburg, and as Marmaduke swung down from the cab the engineman put out a grimy paw. "Good-by, Colonel; you tell the folks at the Bend what a run old Windy Marquis give ye, comin' into town!"

Lockspur and Upshaw adjourned at once to the nearby tavern, but Marmaduke, escaping with as few handshakes as possible from the gathering

crowd, procured a horse and galloped away toward Eagle Bend.

He was travel-stained and weary to the bone; his eyes were heavy for want of sleep. The turnpike lay deserted before him, quivering in the heat of the still noon. How often had he galloped homeward over that old highway with a heart exultant and eager! To one whose affections are happily rooted in one spot of soil, there is no dearer emotional experience than this — the sense of home-coming. And yet, as he drew rein near the Fortune cottage, he realized that this eager expectation was not all for the red brick home, which was also in sight amid the oaks, nor the three people waiting for him there; it was the thought of Diana that filled that well remembered land with sweet distinguishment. He found himself questing eagerly for some glimpse or suggestion of her, and it came to him as a kind of perfidy to them that the joy of his return should lie almost exclusively in her name.

But the porch was deserted; the chestnut leaves drooped in silence over the little cottage, whose shutters were drawn against the midday glare. Stupefied with fatigue, disordered as to apparel, the fastidious instinct of the lover adjudged him unpresentable — the hour unpropitious; he was fully content with one small token of her — an open book upon a rustic bench. None but Diana went to read out under the trees; by chance Mr. Fortune

might do so, but that respecter and guardian of good books would never have left the volume there, to the uncertain mercy of the July skies.

He shook his reins and rode onward. Diana was at home, this was certain. He dwelled upon the thought in a kind of tender luxury, turning it over in his mind with the pleased, stupid deliberation of those who are very weary and at the same time very glad.

A significant change was observable in the old place. The fields and river bottoms gave no vistas of waving corn; there was no yodeling of negroes going afield after dinner, no stampeding of young horses in the pastures at his approach, no shocks of wheat.

Ragweed and crab-grass and the ox-eye daisy flourished everywhere, and the whole plantation had an almost sinister stillness: the sound of his horse's footsteps, the rasp of a lone cicada, the call of a red-bird in the orchard — these were all. It chanced that even the whispering oaks were still.

He left his horse at the hitching post and walked over the grass to the porch. Mis' Carrie Lou lay quietly asleep in a big chair behind the honeysuckle, her thin old hands crossed on her lap. From the depth of the cool hall came the slow tick of the big clock, and the sound of gentle snoring; the old master, too, was slumbering.

Marmaduke waked his aunt with a light kiss upon

her withered cheek; unflurried and undisturbed, she put on her glasses, and looked at him.

"Henry," she said, softly. In the quiet breathing of the name there was an intimation of relieved heartache too poignant for any words. She rose and clung to him for a little while, silent and trembling. "How strange you found me sleeping!" she said, finally. "It seems to me I have not really slept since you went away. Henry — my Henry!"

Old Judge Marmaduke came striding out and shook his son's hand. "I'd never looked to see ye again," he said; he had no way of speaking his affection, he was an undemonstrative man. Lorena appeared as if from nowhere, a storm of kisses and tears.

The aged Joram came around the house, rubbing his hand upon the leg of his trousers that it might be fit for contact with the palm of Marse Henry; Bildad and the old cook came to speak and be spoken to.

He spent a narrative hour with the family, after dinner, upon the porch, within sound of a rainstorm advancing over the river. Through numberless questions he beat his way cavalry-fashion — the more recent things first, as is always the way with the loved returned traveler — the journey home, then Gettysburg, and back to the long raid, the lost battle, and the flight in the mountains.

"Ah, it's good to be home again!" he cried, and

his heart was full as he looked upon the familiar woods thrilling with the rain.

"I never looked to see ye again," said Judge Marmaduke.

"Cousin Henry," said Lorena, "did you hear anything about David, up there?"

Marmaduke looked away. "I left that part out," he said. "I thought I would speak of it later. . . . Yes, Lorena, I did."

The girl stood up. "He is dead," she said, with subtle divination. She spoke quietly.

"Yes, he is dead," said Marmaduke. He went on with the story hastily, omitting all that led to his own positive conviction that Romilly's death was suicide. Before he finished Lorena had disappeared.

"Gone off to cry," said Mis' Carrie Lou. "Henry, you must go and lie down — you are worn out."

He smiled a weary assent, and went to his room, falling asleep with the windows open, to the sound of the windless rain in the oaks. He slumbered through most of the afternoon.

When he awoke the sun was shining in his window. He rose refreshed in muscle and nerve. The long wayward day was waning in a glory of green leaves, the woods were shimmering, the grass was dry again.

Shaved, bathed, and dressed in clean garments, there came to him a contemplative peacefulness, the first intimation of such feeling since the days before

Gettysburg. He had felt the death of Romilly most keenly. Grief over the death of a dear friend, when bereft of its acute phases, finally resolves itself into a simple sense of lost treasure, it being clearly Heaven's intention that a man should be able to stand alone. It was the manner and tragic cause that he took most to heart — it was a thing so unlooked for, so peculiar and so pitiful — and he could not get over his surprise, out of all the innumerous opportunities he had for missing it, that destiny, with pedantic nicety of time and place, should have called him in to witness the last scene, and enable him to read the previous chapters — a still, small, dramatic chronicle — by the aid of a few trifling relics!

Romilly had no near relatives at hand to take over these effects; his brother and the distant kinsmen of his name in Spanishburg were all away in the Southern army, and moreover, viewed their relative as an unspeakable renegade. Of all living persons Marmaduke himself stood nearest to the dead man; he decided to retain them, and for safe keeping put them in Lorena's charge. When he called her to him and gave her the sword and scabbard, the well worn watch, the wallet and papers — all but the ring — she quietly took them in her hands.

"I will try to keep them safe," she said, with a white little smile, and she carried them to her room. There she sat with them, staring blankly, in grief

too bitter and barren even for tears; the years unrolled before her empty and undesirable; she felt already old.

And this was all that was left of him — a sword and scabbard, a watch, and a leathern wallet — and the memory of him — a grave and gentle man, whose face was beautiful to her, who was patient with her, and uncritical, and kind — one who unfailingly transcended all her girlish ideals of what a gentleman should be. And she — such was the fashion of her loving — would gladly have given up her life if so he might have lived. But he had never known this, and he was dead.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE PENNYROYAL

THE light of the July sun was yet in the sky when Marmaduke walked down the lane and over the foot-log to see Diana. There was no sound but of birds and insects. The woodthrush rang his sudden splendid bells, and in the sycamore tops the piercing cicada worked madly as his time grew short.

The hour was full of memories of Romilly; his old friend was everywhere. In their walks and talks in the old days they had made much of the beauty of the natural world, and there never came to Marmaduke any sudden sense of splendor in the day but he thought of his friend. It was of him, indeed, that he learned to consciously delight in the colors and forms of life, and to make trials at expression, to coin phrases to fling at the sunset, and at all seasons to rapture in the earth's loveliness.

He sat down upon a boulder by the path. The odor of pennyroyal, bruised under his heel, through the swift, memoriferous power of the senses, brought back vividly the night after Gettysburg. That majestic battle had been very wonderful to him, taking possession of both soul and sense; it

had moved him to a point of view wherefrom all individual human affairs shrunk into inconsequence. It did not seem of any great importance that any one person, or a thousand persons, should perish. The genius of carnage, supreme upon the field, had permitted not so much as a pang of true sympathy; the rolling tumultuary contest quelled every other quiver of feeling to make room for a demoniacal orgy of dramatic glory. When it was over these human sympathies came out from their hiding, just as the frightened birds, after a time, began to sing.

And yet, after all, for the ranks upon ranks of soldiers who fell that day in the wheatfields, he had but a broadly human compassion — he did not know them; poor fellows, they were so many, their fate seemed as the fate of one. But for Romilly, who had been dearer than a brother, his heart had been wrung with exquisite anguish; the death of ten thousand soldiers was to him less grievous, less momentous, than the passing of this dear friend. He could never think of that night without a clutch at his throat, a grieved, compassionate wonder at what maleficent and tragic thing it was that brought his old comrade to prefer to die rather than accept life upon the terms it was offered him. To know that this thing was some unknown woman's caprice or perfidy neither heightened nor demeaned the tragedy, it merely lent to it the color of pitiful

irony. And how intimately the smell of the pennyroyal linked this evening with the field of Gettysburg!

His soul was subtly prescient of the coming hour — the eager hour he had so long wished for; but Romilly — so subtle and so potent was the little wisp of pennyroyal — with a sad insistence claimed the present moment in his friend's life for his very own. As he sat watching the darkness gather he felt the actual loss of the man, for he had been allowed, until this moment, to escape the full and dreary realization that his friend was absolutely no more — was gone from the good earth utterly — that his voice and his counsel and his good talk and comradeship could never come back again.

CHAPTER XXX

IN THE GARDEN

THE moment passed, as all acute moments must. The thought of Diana came as daylight comes upon a bad dream. He rose and went on. It had often come to him, as it came to him now, how brief were the hours they had been together — how few the words they had interchanged — how little of her he really knew. *"God bring you back safe from the war!"* was a message he had built upon recklessly, forgetting the long period in which the thought of her had been a perplexity and torture, not unmixed with despair. He was seized with an instant's doubt if the message meant anything more than kindness and goodwill. When he considered how meager were their interviews, it was discouraging to think upon what a littleness so much greatness depended. The most substantial thing was that she had saved his life. This was a great deal in itself. Doubtless she would have done as much for anyone, but he warmed himself with the thought that it gave him a kind of claim upon her — the claim of his own gratitude. Offsetting this was the mental picture of Bigstaff escaping in the night, with Diana speeding his departure

jubilantly, perhaps with tenderness, perhaps — how could he know? — with embraces and tears! — This was a picture to be effaced, after a little imaginative effort, with the recollection of what Bigstaff was — a half-illiterate man, coarse-grained and self-important. The lover's instinct taught him the lady of his dreams was fastidious — and what fastidious woman could love a man like that? There could be no real recrudescence of doubt. "God bring you back safe from the war!" was in his heart, not to be cast out. He had gone through many vicissitudes of love and longing; through it all he had been even amazed at the phenomenon of love itself, and its passionate persistence. He knew himself for a man of sense, emotional but not sentimental, and he was astounded to remember how many hours were given to thinking of this one person. The morning did not break when he did not think of her on waking; in the night ridings the thought of her was as constant as the roll and clatter of the horses' footsteps. He was a man of action, a master of affairs, reputed far and wide to be devoid of fear, and yet here in the peace of a summer evening his very soul was trembling.

The air was rich with honeysuckle, and wet with dew; the evening was soft and still. He heard the ripple of the creek and his own pulse beats; he drew a quiet breath, and paused, with a wave of dizziness, and also — as always in time of stress — a feeling

of the unreality of things. For almost instantly the evening seemed to change to night — there came a sudden outbreak of stars, and with it a wondering sense of overpowering kindness and sweetness; the darkling aisles of the woods were filled with gladness — murmurs came to him from the trees, personal reassurances, tender and gay. A shiver came over him lest something should happen yet in the instant that must intervene ere he was with her.

Then he saw her. She was sitting on the porch in the lamplight that came through the window. He drew near, striding almost drunkenly, and mounted the steps, the instant passing silently. His voice sounded far away, and fainter than the pounding of his pulse.

"Diana!"

She remained for a second mute and motionless. Then she rose, stood still, her hand to her cheek.

"Oh, it is you!" she breathed. "You!"

Then other words came, words merely, unmeasured and unremembered; his senses were cloyed. For an inarticulate moment they sat together; then he grew aware of their going down the steps and out under the trees, he making some show of helping her; it was his own suggestion that they should sit in the garden, but he was scarcely conscious that he had offered it — it came as a reflex to the sense of the proximity of people, and the imperative need of privacy. "We have so many things to talk

about," he managed to say clearly at last, as one voices a well drilled speech.

"And what do you wish to talk about first?" she asked, with swiftly recovered equipoise; she lifted her head and regarded him with a smile as she added, gallantly: "Barney Bigstaff?"

"Is he necessary?"

"I meant to tell you about him," she said. "It seemed to me difficult — it *is* difficult — but I meant to tell you — the first thing — when we met."

They found a seat under the great chestnuts, where he had seen her book that day. He waited for her to go on. For her part, she was diverted by a sudden rush of joy that what she had so long feared was really past and done with — the daily and nightly dread that they should never meet again at all!

He could see her eyes clearly, for a brightness came about them; the night was filled with a sudden glory before the face of a great moon, uplifted at the end of the valley.

She was smiling.

"You knew it was I who let him escape?" she said.

"I heard it was," he said.

She asked, rapidly, "Do you care to have me tell you why?"

He paused. It was quite true he wished to know. "Why, yes," he said, decisively.

She drew a breath in a way that measured some degree of disappointment. He caught at it subtly, sharply.

"Ah, you feel that I should ask no explanation!"

She considered this before replying. "Not that at all. I was just wondering why you should have waited so very long!"

"But, Diana, this is the first chance I have had for free speech with you."

"The first chance? Think," she said. He did not see the curious little upward flicker of her eyelids, but he could not miss the quiet meaning of her tone.

He flushed; he recalled only too clearly the remote, and as it seemed now, almost incredible fact that he had ridden away from Spanishburg and from her in a passion of inexorable jealousy — alas, that he had forgotten it! alas, that it was like him to forget!

"Oh, forgive me!" he cried. "Forgive me that — that unspeakable discourtesy and clownish rudeness — forgive me! And forgive me, too, if you can, the presumption that let me come to you tonight with any other words but pardon — pardon me!"

"I do forgive you, Henry," she said, speaking swiftly. "I forgave you a good while ago."

"How good you are to me! It is not too late, then, for me to explain?"

"It is I who should first explain —" she broke in.

"But let me tell you!" he persisted. "I did not learn that you had helped Bigstaff to escape, until

the night before I left Spanishburg — then too, I heard that he was your accepted lover, and I believed it — I had seen him come into your house as though he lived there — I had seen how furiously angry and jealous he was at finding *me* there — and I remembered, then, that I had talked with you about Micajah Lea's peculiar weakness. And when I heard how you had used it to help Bigstaff to escape, I was blind with rage, for I thought — I could not help thinking — that you loved him!"

Her face was turned away from him. "But — if I did love him — ?"

"If you did love him?" He repeated her words in a sudden hot fear of her. "I don't understand."

"When did you learn," she asked, "that I did not love Barney Bigstaff?"

"But you do *not* love him!" he cried. "For God's sake, tell me that you do not!"

She paused. "No, I do not."

It was some moments before he could speak. "What a fright you gave me!" he said presently.

"Fright? Why?"

"Why? Oh, do you pretend to believe that it could mean nothing to me that — "

"Wait," she said, with a thrill in her voice. "It is my turn at explaining. You see," she went on, "I had done Colonel Bigstaff a great wrong, as I thought; I had betrayed his confidence, shamefully, but I did it for — well, let us say for the Cause.

And I had a chance to make him reparation — and I did it. I helped him to escape. Do you think I had any right to?"

"Why, yes," he said, considering; then, more warmly, "Why, most assuredly!"

Diana sighed contentedly.

"I have felt much ashamed for it — not that he escaped, poor man: I was always glad of that — but for the — the barbarous way I set about it! But it was the only way — and the impulse came to me, for good or evil. You see, I had lied to Colonel Bigstaff!"

"Lied?"

"Yes — and do you know about what? About you! I told him you were not in the house —"

"That morning he came with his soldiers —"

"Yes — I told him you were not in the house; I swore it. And he believed me! Oh, tell me that you understand — my woman's reason — my wish to make amends!"

"I do understand!" Marmaduke cried. "Oh, if you had told me — then — there — that morning —"

"But I betrayed your confidence —"

"Oh, but Diana —"

"Let me go on — I must clear it all up. I had never lied before — not, at least in cold blood, on my word of honor, and I shall never lie again — I think I never shall! A lie keeps rolling on — its

consequences are endless. See what a vicious circle it was: I abused his faith in me to *save you* — "

"And you *did* save me — "

"Let me finish — and then, to set it right in my own mind and conscience, for he never knew that I helped him, and doubtless he hates me to this day, I turn about and betray your confidence — to save him! And then I had to pay up again — to you. I did pay — do you realize how?"

"All this wonder has come upon me suddenly, Diana — I am half-dazed. You did pay — ah — I do understand. You forgave me for my blundering — you helped my father about the book — "

"Did he tell you?"

"He told me you had prepared the book, with the money in it. Diana, the little message that you sent in it was more to me than money — "

"Did he tell you," broke in Diana, "how the book was sent to you?"

"He said it was managed by the secret service."

"Just so," said she. "Henry Marmaduke, I simply cannot understand how so great a soldier can be such a stupid — Oh, how *can* you be so obtuse? Listen — let me tell you all. When your letter came, about sending the money in a book, I was told about it, and I went to Judge Marmaduke; I told him that I was going to Richmond to take employment under the government; I explained that I wanted to 'run the blockade,' that is, the lines, you

know, with medical supplies — quinine, morphia and chloroform. It was something I had vaguely dreamed of doing ever since I heard that dreadful screaming in the hospital. I said I would be in position to have the money sent to you. And without telling anyone, not even your aunt, or Lorena, he gave me the money, in old Federal currency which he had put away when the war broke out — "

"You did all this — for me!" cried Marmaduke, hoarsely.

"Please don't interrupt. I went, I got into the work, it was difficult — so very difficult — it took such a long time — I could find no one I could trust — and so — at last — "

She found it impossible to finish: her face was turned away.

"You brought it to me — yourself — with these dear hands — O loyal and beautiful Diana!"

For a moment he could say no more. A poignant bliss came over him — a tender glory was in the night, in the whispering trees — a happiness drew close about him, so sweet, it was almost pain. "Oh, how could I divine such tender grace — by what right could I guess such beautiful kindness and loyalty! — And all that time I thought you were lost to me!"

With an effort she turned her eyes to his, starry with tears.

"Lost to you?" she murmured.

"Oh, my love, my love, you knew — surely you knew — how I love you!"

Then some one moved in the shrubbery; a voice (Lorena's voice) called clearly:

"Cristina!"

There was no answer from anywhere, and the voice rang out again:

"*Cristina!*"

This time Diana answered: "Yes? What is it?"

"I came to tell Cousin Henry, that his supper is waiting."

Without another word the sad little figure turned and vanished.

Had she come purposely — heart-broken, tragic, vengeful? The inquiry did not suggest itself to Marmaduke, upon whom the night closed down suddenly, stifling and hot. The wounded person, such as one dashed from a great height, does not feel any immediate pain or become at once aware of what has happened. There is present only a dull sense of some stupendous mischief, too far reaching in its havoc for realization. The mind does not instantly make the attempt.

"Why did she call you that?" he asked, almost mechanically.

"It was a nickname," she said.

"Who gave it to you?" It seemed as though the question was asked by another person, at whom his heart cried out in helpless indignation.

"Captain Romilly," she said.

He leaned back, breathing deeply. The pervading odor of the honeysuckle turned sick in his nostrils. Cristina! The loud sibilance of the katydids became obtrusive; they took up the name and screeched it. He was back upon the field of Gettysburg again, in the humid night, and he heard Upshaw say again, with a plain man's amazement, half pity and half scorn, "Think of it! Just a damned *woman!*"

"When was this?" he asked, surprised at the evenness of his own voice.

"When the Federal forces took Spanishburg. He was stationed here. But why need we talk, now, of Captain Romilly?"

"Why need we?" He had no revulsion of feeling toward this woman by his side. The inexpugnable evidence of her tender loyalty, the beautiful thing she had done for him, his abiding faith in her, the woman's truth and nobility he had believed in as the votary believes in God, all stood between her and the fact.

And yet he had a feeling of being two persons; one was her lover, the other a dead man's friend, demanding justice.

"Do you know what became of him?" he asked, quietly.

"No," she said, wondering.

"He is dead."

"Dead? David Romilly is dead?" Her voice was but a whisper.

"He was killed at Gettysburg. There were three of his friends who were with him when he died, who knew how he came to his death, and why." He spoke in tones of restraint; his voice sounded harsh upon his own ears.

Her hands dropped from her lap, where he had placed them; she lifted her face and looked at him, but she did not speak.

"His battery was not engaged at all. He came far out in the field and put himself in the way of the bullets. . . . There was a ring, with that name in it. There — there were letters — Lockspur read them — it was very plain that he wanted to die. . . . He was the dearest friend, the truest gentleman — oh, God help me — how could you?"

"Tell me," she said, with dry lips, "is this — that he wished to die — is this a guess? Or is it indeed the truth — the very truth — oh, do you *know* it to be true?"

"It is only too true," he answered.

There was silence for a space, and then she tried to speak.

"I cannot see," she began, "I — " She was unable to help herself with words; pitifully stricken she sat in silence, looking up at him. The man's face to her was a face of stone.

"Will you not leave me now?" she asked, presently, with a faint break in her voice.

"Leave you? — now?"

"I have had a — I have had a dreadful blow." She choked; then making an effort, "I must pull myself together," she said. "I must meet it — alone."

Her voice came as though from far away. It seemed hours — days — since he had told her that he loved her. The blind catastrophe of the night had fallen crushingly upon the man himself, filling his mouth with bitter dust. He could not speak to her now of love, nor of anything; his one desire was that which she herself had expressed — to be alone.

He rose to go, turning after a few steps to look back at her; her face was white and wistful in the moonlight. He felt her eyes holding his for an instant, and then, without a word, he went away.

CHAPTER XXXI

AT THE WINDOW

HE SCARCELY knew how he threaded the way down the hill or found the foot log; he walked like a blind man, amazed and wondering, and sick with grief.

A garden bench, against which he stumbled, made him aware that he had come home; he dropped upon it, and leaned his back against the tree under which it was set. The great night breathed deep with silent life; the far cry of the shoals came to his ears; the oak trees pulsated with the night-long clamor of the katydids.

He felt tremendously alone. Words and phrases of the recent interview repeated themselves in his mind: they lingered upon the air like vocal echoes; the name Cristina rang insistently, like a bell.

From its attitude of stupid unbelief that this thing could be, his mind sprang presently into an irresolute activity, furiously contending, now for Diana, now for Romilly.

Romilly was dead, he said to himself hotly — he was but a memory. He had been rather morbid at best. No sane man wished to die because a woman had been faithless. Doubtless she had made

herself very pleasing — she had used her nobler self as a stalking horse. There was no doubt of that. For he knew Romilly, with his exquisite sense of the true or false. Why had she done it? Why had she played with the man? Had she cared for him at all? — or had she wished simply to amuse herself? He could not bring himself to think of her as a poor flirt. He could not guess her side of the story. Romilly's, by the simple calling of a name in the darkness, he guessed all too easily; the man, to use the convenient phrase, had been encouraged; knowing what manner of man David Romilly was, it was not idle to guess that he had been beautifully encouraged. It was cruel — it was damnably cruel.

But Romilly — he had not played the part of a man. He had no right to go moping to his death about an unrequited love. It was not her fault that she was radiant and sweet.

Poor Romilly — poor Romilly! Obstreperous troops of memories came unbidden, crowding thick — schooldays and holidays, and walks by field and flood — and the first time his friend came to the house, when they had filled the place with joyous laughter, and danced in the firelight, and Romilly's last visit there, when he had been told if ever he needed the services of a friend, to ask that service from his friend Marmaduke. Was he calling for that service now — that loyalty? — was his ranging

spirit asking its living familiar for revenge? Poor Romilly! not so! Never such call could come from that magnanimous soul, in life, or heaven, or hell — it was not his way.

He sat for a long while upon the bench. Softly a cowbell jangled in the moonlit pasture. A handful of Confederate infantry lay in the old camp ground, and from this direction there broke suddenly the sturdy voice of a guard, calling the hour. "Twelve o'clock, and all's well!"

The reiterated cry, traveling from post to post, died away beyond earshot, and stillness prevailed again — a stillness that had a personality, and stared him in the face.

Gradually he gave up all mental effort. He stretched himself out on the bench, and lay looking at the stars. He was made aware of how the blood had been throbbing in his temples by a succeeding softer pulsebeat; he realized how painful had been the hour by the relieving peace that came to him, for he perceived that he was wrestling with a factitious problem. The sense of disaster shrunk into the compass of things that shall pass. His friend had been wronged — and she — well, she was not, or had not been, the person he had thought her, but she was she, his gift from heaven, and he loved her.

Looking upon the solemn mid-summer night it came to him happily that love was of the eternal

things, and that this precious concern for the memory of an unfortunate friend was not.

He rose and walked a little way under the trees to a point from which he could see her house. A light was burning in her library, the dull red star that he had so often in other days observed without particular interest. Something sharp and terrible and sweet caught at him. The hour he had passed with her was his own hour, immortal with passionate tenderness. Nothing could change it — the seal of love was upon it — she had laid her heart bare to him — she loved him! And he had left her alone and uncomforted; he had brought her to judgment, and turned away from her when she needed help, when he might have lifted her in his arms!

He swiftly retraced his way down the lane, over the foot log, and up the hill. He thought no more of Romilly or Romilly's wrongs, nor cared; his heart knew only a sweet embarrassment and a passionate surrender to the imperious call.

The dull small square of light of a sudden grew large; a moment and he was standing before the open window.

The interior was obscured by curtains. He could hear no sound of voices, so he judged that she was alone. He rapped gently at the casement, and called to her. There was no reply, but the light was presently extinguished. Then he heard a faint

rustle at the curtains and her voice, and his name.

"I have not frightened you?" he said.

"Frightened me? No — not now. I knew at once it was you."

"You are alone?"

"Yes."

"You did not mean for me not to come back?"

She did not answer. He inspired deeply; his leaping heart took his breath.

"I love you. You know that I love you," he said.

She made no movement. His heart throbbed heavily against the sill. A despairing sense of futility came over him. He divined that she was not embarrassed, nor uncertain of her mind; the room seemed to hold a stricken woman passionately resolved.

"Will you not speak to me?" he said.

"Why did you come back?"

"I love you."

She breathed deeply.

"You have known for a long time that I love you," he said. "Have you not?"

The windowledge was breast high — he leaned against it, reaching out his hands. She stood a little way within the room, dimly discernible, motionless, silent.

"Tonight I was bewildered," he said. "I had the idea fixed in my mind that the woman Romilly

cared for had treated him very badly. I hated the very thought of her. I can't make out to say what I wish. . . . I don't know why I went away — only because I was shocked and distressed, and you desired to be left alone." He stopped, oppressed by the futile sound of his own words. Then he cried out, wildly, "Ah, dearest, give me your hand! — come to me!"

"I want you to leave me," she said sententiously.

"Do you not care for me?" he said.

"I am afraid," she said.

"Afraid?"

"Don't speak so loud. . . . Tonight it may be true that you love me. Tomorrow, or the next day, perhaps, you will think about David Romilly's corpse — and then about me — a murderess."

"These terms are simply pictorial," he said. "I know you have never been ignoble."

She gave a little laugh. "Do you not think I flirted with Captain Romilly? He used to talk so much about you; I loved to hear him talk. I was very lonely and very idle. It's a design in black paint. Do you care to have it?"

"No," said he. "Do you speak in this way to test me?"

"Test you? I have already tested you, Henry." She mused a little. "Don't think I am unhappy about David Romilly. I have no feeling to spare for him."

"It seems to me I am contending with something — something I do not understand," he said. "I am not used to these subtleties. Do you really think this affair of Romilly means so much — that it will come between us?"

"It has already come between us."

"Not if you love me."

"Have I said I loved you?"

"No. But, O Diana, you do love me, do you not?"

She would not answer.

"There has come into my mind an old, old love song, which is Solomon's," he said. "'*Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm* —'"

She broke in with an inarticulate cry, but he went on: "'*For love is strong as death. . . . Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned!*'"

"I wish you to go," she said.

"May I speak bluntly?" he asked. "You have taken an attitude about this. You did a great unkindness to a dear friend of mine, and it had much to do with his taking off. And you have assumed that this means I can never forgive you, can never think well of you, cannot go on loving you. Isn't this true?"

She stepped forward into the full pour of the moonlight. Her beautiful face was white and tragic.

"I am not concerned about your forgiveness, since you ask," she said, proudly. "I have just found myself in the most terrible crisis of my life, and in that crisis I looked to you, and saw, not the face of a friend or lover, but the face of a judge. And upon that you leave me and think it over, and decide that you will — that you will open your heart to me, which you had shut in my face! — Oh, I had not dreamed you were like this — I dreamed — "

"Is this just to me?" he broke in. "Was I to learn, without one moment's thought or care for him, that you had ruined the life of my friend — "

"I dreamed of a great love and a perfect trust," she went on, wildly, "and I found myself — I found myself a culprit at the bar! Oh, leave me — "

"Oh, but not in this way!" he cried, despairingly. He saw their happiness crumbling to pieces in the storm of her passion, while he stood powerless to save it. "In the name of all that you have been to me, let us not part in anger!"

"What does it matter how we part? I am not angry — I — I am — desolate! — Oh, leave me!" she cried, passionately, blindly. "Leave me forever!"

The blood rose to his face, but he drew rein on

himself; for a little space he was silent, when he spoke his voice was gentle. "I have wounded you. I did not mean to — I know so little of women's ways. I only know" — he hesitated — "I only know that I love you." For a moment he lingered; then, "Good-night, Diana," he said. "Will you not give me your hand?"

She placed it in his palm, it trembled sharply, he bent and kissed it.

"Oh, Henry, good-by," she breathed.

The little creek sang madly under the foot log as he passed over; a bird was singing in the sycamores. He walked slowly, with an aching heart, remembering the tragic sorrow in her face. To him that convulsive passion was dimly understood, or not at all, for his was a simple nature, rich only in its large simplicities. How could he fathom the desolation of that quivering soul, with its stricken conscience and imperious pride — how could he trace the intricate springs that turned this night of love into tragedy? He could not think quietly at all; he was torn by importunate impulses, by remorse and regret, by the thought of what he might have said and what he should not have said. On one point he was clear; he would not let this blind misadventure of the night keep them apart. He sat in his chair by the window, looking out on the summer night, which was quick with breathings and beauty under

the refulgent moon. That moon was pale before the morning when he lay down to rest.

And yet his last thought, before sleep came to him, was that his unfailing friend, his loving comrade, was dead at her hands — dead and done for — a prey to worms.

CHAPTER XXXII

LORENA

LATE in the forenoon he was waked by a faint jingle of cup and spoon. He was instantly aware of a heaviness of heart; the feeling stole into his consciousness even before he could remember why. Lorena stood at the mirror, idly touching her hair. She wore a bright blue dress; in her fine blue eyes — he saw her image in the glass — was the old look of serious concern. But grief had not marked her; her delicate rose-leaf beauty had all its morning-freshness, as of old. This seemed a thing vouchsafed to her as a compensation; and as she stood there looking at herself, not without discrimination, she rejoiced in it for all her sorrow and was proud of it. She could not bear to have her cousin pity her, or compare her unfavorably with the woman who — to use her own phrase — had taken David's love from her. She had made herself as pretty as she could when she brought up the breakfast tray.

She saw, in the glass, that he was looking at her, and turned about, but waited for him to speak.

"How pretty you are, Lorena!" he said.

She smiled. It was a relief to know that he was not put out with her.

"I wonder if that is why I miss you so much when you are away?" She filled his cup; he took it up and sipped it. "You are always saying I am pretty — you and old Dick, and Jack Lockspur, and —"

There was another she could not bring herself to name. But Marmaduke could; he knew they must have a talk about him. He set down the cup and clasped his knees over the counterpane.

"And Romilly," he said.

Her lips quivered a little, and small white spots came in her chin. She walked away to the window and came back to him.

"You will forgive me for interfering the way I did last night, won't you, Henry?"

"Forgive you?" He had not thought of her act as a wilful thing; he had not thought of it at all, except as a part of the machinery of fate.

"I knew you didn't know anything about the way she treated David, and I couldn't stand it," she said.

He was puzzled.

"I was listening, Henry; I didn't go over there to listen, but I came near and heard you telling her that —"

She broke off. "I couldn't help it," she added, and swallowed hard.

He looked at her in wonder. Her manner was not apologetic; it was simply defensive.

"How did you know about it?" he asked, patiently.

"I knew you didn't know who 'Cristina' was — I knew *she* hadn't told you — and no one else knew — but me. David couldn't have told you — you said he — you said he — never spoke." She breathed fast, and bit her lip.

"But where did you learn about this? Did he tell you?"

"David? No. I saw him only the one time."

"Then she must have told you."

"She did not. We never talked of David, except once. She showed me a book of poems he had given her, and on the flyleaf he had written, 'To Cristina.' You know I am jealous-hearted, Henry; it struck me like a knife, and I accused her of flirting with him. She laughed and said I needn't be concerned about Captain Romilly, he was too magnificently self-centered to lose his heart to a mere woman; she said he was a dear fellow, and exceptional, and all that, but he took himself too seriously. We never spoke of him again."

Marmaduke mused. "You feel that she did him a great wrong — drew him on — and then — threw him over?"

"I know she did," said Lorena.

"But how could you know?"

"I was putting away your things last night, and I found this." She plucked at her finger and

extended her hand. In the palm lay Romilly's ring.

"David gave it to her; she gave it back to him; you found it in his pocket. There's her name in it — the name he called her by." She turned away to the window. When she faced him again her tearless eyes were full of despair. "He was sweet to me, Henry — and maybe — sometime — I was always slow — maybe when I had grown to his estate he might — oh, Henry! she made a *mess* of it — she spoiled *everything!* — If it hadn't been for her, David would be alive and well today. . . . I don't know what makes me think so — I feel it. I hate her! I hate her! I am *glad* she is gone!"

Marmaduke's voice rang like a bell. "Gone?"

"You didn't know? She left on the nine o'clock train, for Richmond."

"Richmond!" He repeated the word in stunned dismay.

"Yes. She spent the night packing," said Lorena. "Mrs. Fortune sent over to borrow Joram to help with the trunks. I supposed you knew."

She stood looking at the ring in her hand. Suddenly her mouth was caught in a spasm, her eyes flooded; with a passionate gesture she flung the ring to the floor and left the room.

CHAPTER XXXIII

"I!" — "I!" — "I!"

MARMADUKE took to work that day as another man might take to drink. He galloped off to town, gathered together in council all the officers who had reported for duty, made arrangements for quartering the remnant of the Old Regiment — now on the way to Spanishburg — and by noon he got back to Eagle Bend, bringing Lockspur and Upshaw with him to dinner. He had a sharp dispute with his father concerning the war; the old man insisted that the battle of Gettysburg was potentially decisive; Marmaduke grew angry, and it was now a mere mortification to recall his lifelong pride in Marse Jubal's cold infallible power of judgment. The old jurist was quietly sure that the Confederacy could not stand, and he was prepared for its destruction; all of his personal holdings that he could convert were now invested in foreign bonds. The discussion was short, for neither of the men had any taste for wrangling, and Marmaduke was off to town again in his shirtsleeves, riding ahead of his friends in the hot sun, beating his horse with his hat. That afternoon he sat to his desk, dealing swiftly with letters, despatches, and requisitions, not

allowing himself an idle moment; he had long since learned that there is no medicine or philosophy so good for the heart as toil.

And yet he suffered heavily, with irrepressible longings; sometimes, when talking, he took a deep breath, to lift a crushing weight about his heart. Diana's beautiful pale face haunted him; now with cold reproach, now with a tragic sweetness and tenderness. His first impulse was to take the next train and go in pursuit of her; though his written orders and his conscience both clearly directed him to stay in Spanishburg, he would have thrown these to the wind and gone after her, but something else forbade. It was his sense of dignity. Diana had fled from him. In a wild necessity of escape she had gone where she thought he could not follow her; the act itself bespoke a resolution which would not yield to pursuit.

As he rode by the Fortune cottage on his way home an old negress came out and gave him a letter. Miss Diana, she explained, had left it there with instructions to deliver it that evening. Marmaduke rode on at a walk, tearing open the letter, sweeping its brief words hungrily:

I was overstrained last night and my speech was ungracious, but I am counting on your liberal nature to overlook that. I cannot bear to slip away without telling you how dearly I wish you may be happy. I go to Richmond. I am going away because it is the

best and simplest thing to do. Don't write to me. This is not a command. I ask it as a favor.

Sincerely yours,
DIANA FORTUNE.

He crushed the note in his hands. Why was she gone? What was it, after all, that had come between them? She had let it appear that he had deeply wounded her, and he felt, indeed, that he had; but he was sure she had not gone away because she was angry and no longer cared for him: she would not have gone to that trouble, nor would she have done him that much honor. Beyond this he was sure of nothing, except that he loved her; never had she been so dear to him, never had his heart gone out to her with such chivalry and tenderness.

He rode slowly along the highway, musing, with her letter crumpled in his hand. All day he had felt that the misadventure was somehow retrievable, but there was a ring of finality in her letter. There grew upon him now a sense of the inevitable. Whatever thing it was that had sent her away, he knew it was no mere hectic impulse. Had he loved her less he might have coldly dissected the threads with which she had woven her pitiful tangle of tragedy — wayward vanity and unthinking folly, a sensitive pride and a still more sensitive conscience; he might have known how clear Diana's way must seem to her, and that it lay in renunciation. But he did not know; he was too chivalrously tender to put her

motives to a brutal scrutiny; he chose to put the blame upon himself, feeling that somehow he had blundered, that somehow, as a man should, he might have played the nobler, stronger part. And it was over now, past all recall; she was gone, and he was alone. He was very white and his lips were dry as he smoothed out the creases in the letter. It was all he had of her: it seemed a desecration to destroy it.

Down the turnpike rose a cloud of dust. He put the letter away in his pocket. "Up again, old Marmaduke!" he said to himself, and picking up the reins he rode forward.

The cloud grew larger; he could hear an indefinable roar. Faintly, at first, and then again more certainly, and yet again, triumphantly, he heard the joyous pealing of a bugle. The music went through his blood like fire — the Old Squadron was coming!

Wild with the news that their old leader was waiting for them at Spanishburg, the faithful remnant of the command was coming in with a rush. As they drew nearer one keen pair of eyes discerned the commander from afar; a wild cacophonous yell burst from the chest of Johnny Grass.

"Yeap-poo!" he shrieked. "It's *him!*"

Marmaduke saw in the road before him a mass of men on horseback, rocking in the saddle, beating their horses with their sabres, whooping and

yelling with delight; the name of Marmaduke went pealing over the fields in volleys. In a moment more his veterans were around him, a disorganized dusty mob; they laid hold upon him, reaching for him, touching him, patting him; privates and officers crowded pell-mell upon their chieftain, exulting, laughing, swearing, and weeping; his ears were dinned with their shouting. I cannot write what they said, for the expression of a soldier's emotion is in profanity, which is not pretty in print. But to Marmaduke it was not ugly, it meant loyalty and devotion unto death, and his lip quivered. He raised his hat and made a call for silence. Then, "Who will take the saddle with me again?" he cried; it was a summons to his own heart.

And eagerly the old cry answered it — "I!" — "I!" — "I!"

CHAPTER XXXIV

IN THE MOUNTAINS

MARMADUKE rode with his troops into Spanishburg; it was late in the summer night when he returned, alone. His horse's footsteps were almost noiseless in the dust lying thick on the turnpike, and as he rode he composed a letter to Diana; when he reached his room he sat down and wrote it, in deliberate heedlessness of her expressed wish. It was a hot-hearted love letter, bold and importunate; it contained no subtleties, no arguments, no doubts; it was all passion and devotion; he wrote it in a glow of tenderness, and he took joy in it, never pausing for words, as these came faster than he could write them, for he was young, and his heart was filled with hot desire.

The letter was sent by post, but there was no answer. He was kept very busy with his recruiting, but he counted the days: a fortnight passed; a month went by, with drilling and training. He wrote again. September came, but no letter from Diana. Instead, there came orders to move. On a brilliant autumn morning the cavalry swung out over the hills, and Spanishburg, which had changed hands so often, had its last look at Confederate soldiers under arms.

Marmaduke was glad to go; he had a man's work cut out for him and he sprang at it, not joyfully, indeed, but avidly, and with all his might. His heart was sore, his men were poorly equipped, his cause — the cold suspicion would not down — was a losing one. It was therefore a man's work indeed that he had to do, and he did it in a man's way; he went into the campaign again with all the old zeal and fierceness, savagely scornful of the ultimate day of disaster.

The fighting began within twenty miles of Spanishburg; dreadful months of hardships followed, with Chickamauga in them, and the Hundred Days, and a bitter season upon picket, and summer campaigns of heat and dust, hunger and raggedness, and fighting, always fighting.

In the last winter of the war the command barely escaped complete destruction. The cavalry was sent to intercept a raid on the salt works of the Confederacy, and in the mountains they fought a bloody fight. The battle was not decisive; they hardly knew whether they had won a victory or lost.

For the organization was badly cut up, and weighed down with gloom. The weather was bitterly cold, the skies were like iron, and the temperature fell steadily. Over the ridges and the stony forests the wind raged and howled. From the chimneys of mud-daubed cabins the smoke was whipped

down upon the clearings. The horses huddled together with drooping eyelids.

A scout arrived, his face and eyes inflamed with riding in the pitiless blast. He was so stiff he had to be assisted from his horse; his clothing was pierced with bullets. Marmaduke could scarcely recognize in the ragged and weather-worn soldier his intrepid old friend, Micajah Lea.

"They've filled the salt works," said Old Thousand-Yards. "And there's also—"

He cleared his throat and paused, turning his face from the wind and watching the leaves hurtling down the mountain side. The gaunt old scout of many campaigns seemed mentally benumbed with cold and fatigue. He roused himself with an effort. "There's a passel of webfeet in your rear."

"Many?" said Marmaduke.

"I dunno," said Micajah. "I counted twenty-one rigimental colors, and I seed a-plenty of cavalry."

"On what road?"

"All the roads. I come by the woods. I dunno how I done it."

Sharp snow was now driving.

"You can find no way for us to get out?" said Marmaduke.

There was a dull helplessness in the old soldier's face. He was the most capable scout in the cavalry, a man with an instinct for topography keener than

an eagle's, but in his rugged and grizzled face there was that which said he had come to the end of his row.

"*You* kin, maybe," said he.

Everywhere, as Marmaduke passed among the men, he met the same intimations of dependency. The terrible cold and the sense of coming disaster had wrought havoc among the stalwart troopers; they looked with hope only to their Captain. Truculent, arrogant, resourceful, they had come through starving and cold to a dumb inertia; they did not try to urge themselves, for not only the power but the will was paralyzed.

Lockspur came pallid and hollow-eyed, his cheeks encrusted with ice. "Is there any possible way to get out of this place?" he asked.

"We will make a way," said Marmaduke, quietly.

"Right!" said the Doctor, hoarsely. Unknown to his chief, Lockspur had been wounded, but he saw too much wretchedness and suffering to open his mouth about his own trouble; sick and light-headed he stuck to his horse, shaking in the folds of his blanket.

"Are you ill, Lockspur?"

"Oh, don't worry about me — keep these people moving."

Marmaduke gave the order to burn all the empty wagons; and when the command had rallied to horses and got in motion he rode at the head of

the column, leading the way. Many of the men preferred to go on foot, limping beside their hobbling horses. A kind of disorder like scratches had broken out among the brutes; the bits froze to their protruding lips, and breasts and forelegs were glazed with a bloody ooze from fissured and distorted nostrils. But limping, suffering, silent, men and horses followed where he led them, by devious and winding ways where it would have seemed impossible to go except that they knew he was conducting the column; and at last they reached the gap where the enemy's forces had entered the valley and beleaguered them.

But what a horrid sight was there! All along the roads were corpses, cartridge boxes, knapsacks, rifles, dogtents, broken wagon bodies; and, stretching beyond vision, were dead horses of the enemy — dead of cold. The typical attitude was that of an overturned bench with rigid legs. Some knelt with muzzles frozen to the earth; some lay with upraised heads; some leaned against banks with elephantine legs split from hock to knee; they all seemed so pitifully human, even in their grotesque grewsomeness, and all were frozen to the heart. In the wayside cabins and houses exhausted Union soldiers lay upon the floors; Southerners and Northerners bent over the same fire. The pity and the horror of it struck Marmaduke more keenly than the bludgeoning winds. "Ah the poor men — and the poor brutes!" he cried to Lockspur. "What a price they paid!"

But Lockspur made no reply. He was still shaking in his blanket, his eyes were half closed, his head nodded like a sick crow's. The woods growled at the sabring of the sweeping winds, which struck the soldiers in the face with missiles of ice. The pottering trample of the horses became muffled; nothing could be heard but their coughing, and the rattle of accoutrements. Many of the horses, the best mounts in the service, had stopped outright and could not go on. Marmaduke rode up and down the column, urging, commanding, chaffing, swearing a little, herding the stragglers, threatening companies and squadrons which showed a disposition to stop and build fires and talk of mutiny; when he could not make them follow him he turned upon the stragglers with the flat of the sabre and drove them. And so, not by any miracle (as some have considered it) but by the power of one indomitable heart, the command came out of the mountains.

That grim adventure was only the beginning of the hardships the cavalry suffered that season, but I have no desire to weary you with all that winter's tale. The fiat went forth against the South, but when the April sun and shower started the red-buds and set the service tree into nebulous bloom on the gray hills, Marmaduke and his riders were still in the saddle, riding and fighting every day.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE ROAD TO MABINGDON

ONE day Marmaduke halted his troops to graze the lean horses in a field already vivid with patches of clover. The place was Willow Springs, in southwestern Virginia; the time was early April, and the day was Sunday: to be precise, it was Palm Sunday, eighteen and sixty-five. It was a bland and beautiful morning, shining and clouding, and sweet with blossoms. While the horses grazed the men gathered salad to boil for supper: they had almost nothing else. Upshaw and Lockspur had gone ahead a dozen miles to Mabingdon, which was on the railway; they had taken the telegraph men with them to tap the wires for news of Lee's army. A mighty champing and snorting went up from the busy horses; the lean brutes took everything in their way, including dead weeds and sprouting young clover, which they pulled up by the mouthful, eating dirt and roots together. The men scuffled over the wild mustard, and when they found young onions in an old garden they fought for them. They were incredibly ragged, with wild beards and hollow eyes, but there were no whimperers among them; that element had long since deserted. Marmaduke was

shaving on the back porch of the small farmhouse he had taken for his quarters; his coat, with stars on the collar, hung on a nail beside him. He was a major-general now, and his troops constituted, officially, a division of cavalry, but he commanded more men when he was a colonel. Brigadier-General Vertrees sprawled on the ground in the sun, playing poker with the sergeant-major of the old regiment; Colonel Bullitt sat on the steps, stroking his great beard, and chewing tobacco. He had an open Bible on his knees, but he was not reading it; he was watching a horseman on the distant clay road, moving toward them at a weary gait. "That horse hasn't got much further to go," he remarked. "What do you make of him?"

"More orders from headquarters, I reckon," said Marmaduke.

Having finished his shaving he washed his face and neck, which he did with a good deal of splashing, coaxed his abundant locks into some semblance of order with his fingers, and put on his faded coat of cottonade.

The General's simple toilet thus completed he looked spruce, clean and distinguished. The stranger who was presently brought up to headquarters by the sergeant of the guard had no hesitation as to which person to address.

"General Marmaduke? — Captain Carrington, sir, with orders from headquarters."

Marmaduke broke open the despatch, and read it swiftly.

He was "desired" to collect all his forces and effect a juncture with the Army of Northern Virginia, "with the least practicable delay." "This looks bilious, Bullitt," he said, passing the order to his adjutant-general. Then noting the deadly pallor of the despatch bearer, he said kindly, "Are you ill, Captain?"

"No, sir," said the officer. He separated his dry lips with an effort. "Tired." He did not care to explain that he had ridden for twenty-four hours.

"You came alone?"

"I started with a detail of six men — they all gave out."

"Go in there and lie down, Captain," said Marmaduke.

"Thank you, sir," said the officer. He stumbled across the porch, his blanket on his arm; inside the house he unrolled the blanket on the floor and threw himself upon it. Marmaduke followed him, and placed another blanket over him. The officer did not speak; he was already asleep. "That's a man, Vertrees; take care of him," said Marmaduke. "Orderly, get my horse."

"Are you leaving us?" asked Bullitt.

"I'm going ahead to Mabingdon; I'm anxious for news."

"Going by yourself?"

Marmaduke nodded. His habit of going whenever he pleased without an escort was too well established to cause any protest. As he swung into the saddle he called to Vertrees. "Start the column for Mabingdon by six in the morning, unless you get some other word from me," he said, and with a wave of his hand he rode away jauntily, with his head back and his slouch hat pulled down on his forehead; the wind ruffled the thick curling locks about his ears. There was cheering among the men as he passed along the road on his big bay horse, and a good deal of good-natured bantering. Being reduced to wild greens for subsistence, some of the men aped the motions of a browsing horse, whinnying and snorting on all fours. "I want to eat!" some one called out, and the cry traveled mockingly over the camp in an endless variety of voices, from a plaintive baby's wail to a stentorian shout. "I want to eat! I want to eat!"

They kept it up long after he had passed out of earshot, into the country solitude.

It was pensive, windy April weather, with the spring frogs whistling keenly along the runs; a smell of burning brush mingled with the delicate breath of budding and blooming trees. Marmaduke drew a deep sigh of pleasure as he struck into the quiet country road: it was always a subtle joy to him to change from the life of the camp and the column to a little season of solitude, so that he could live upon

terms of grave and kindly communion with himself and the universe. He had a fair tobacco for his pipe, to which he had taken philosophically as food became scarce; he had a good horse; he had — it was his birthright — a perennial sense of well-being; and he rode in peace of mind. The shrewd guess that the red banner under which he served was toppling to its fall had no power to molest the horseman's passing pleasure in his horse, or in the scent of the wild plum and the tender amenity of the afternoon. The doom of the Confederacy, which hung in the air, filling the days with a memorial sadness, was no new idea to Marmaduke. So painfully had he wrought in his mind with the coming defeat of Southern arms that the bitterness of the inevitable day was already suffered; he had used it up in imagination; for him it was historical.

The amber sunlight, reaching over his shoulders, fingered the land before him tenderly, but ah, it was a lonely land! Desolation sat there on the Virginia hills, and the spring took pot-luck with the genius of ruin. His way lay across the track of armies. Here, red earthworks frowned; there, stark chimneys flung their shadows over devastated fields and forsaken gardens white with bloom. Mouldy cartridge boxes, broken limbers and abandoned wagons strewed the road, and dotted the plain; each object had its clear little shadow in the ineffable sunshine. At times there was no other sound but the rustle of

the buzzards, frightened at his approach from the hollow carcases of horses, or from some other bodies, perhaps less unconsidered, protruding from the soil, as though the misused earth had no more hospitality. He met a few gaunt soldiers plodding past, unarmed, resolved and taciturn: they did not bear the look of deserters; they said they had quit. He saw some women on the way, a few half starved and idle negroes, and some bearded old men, brooding and nonchalant, sitting in the sun.

The distance from Willow Springs to Mabingdon is but twelve miles, but Marmaduke rode twenty. The face of the country was scarred with new-cut military roads, deep-rutted with the wheels of Northern cannon, so that the way was lost in a maze of forks and intersections. He frequently asked for directions, but "b'ar to the right" and "b'ar to the left" became interchangeable terms, dancing in his mind to the music of the spring wind. He knew he was going out of his way, but this did not perturb him, for the spring was in his blood and the wind kept fluttering softly in his ears all that afternoon. The cause for which he had fought fiercely for four years was coming at last to nothing, and in the face of this fact he was curiously undismayed; his heart was filled with old desires and eager longings; a gale of spirits possessed him, inconsequent and irrepressible. He sang snatches of old ballads; he plucked the sassafras boughs by the wayside and chewed

them as though they were luscious; he stopped his horse to listen to the singing of a robin, perched in the top of a linden tree. By a roadside spring house he lingered in talk with a black-browed country girl, who gave him buttermilk; she stood mute with parted lips, breasting a wind of gallantry and foolery, but she laughed and waved her hand to him as he rode over the hill.

Once, as he entered on a space of open country, he caught a distant gleam of arms. At first he thought it a flash of river waters, for everything caught the April sun and shone, but with his glass he made out distinctly a band of Federal cavalry, issuing from a defile and debouching on the plain; they were far away, half hidden in the pale blue smoke. Thereafter he traveled more warily but imperturbably, and toward nightfall, by the merest chance, he circled back into the right road.

After sundown he passed the compliments of the season with a solitary vedette. In the dusk this zealous individual first fired on him and then inquired, "Where in the blazes are you trying to git to?" By this peculiar order of procedure Marmaduke knew his man for a gentleman private of the Old Squadron, and he boldly told his name. It had a magical effect; the vedette was Johnny Grass, and his change of tune was like that of an honest watch-dog which has unwittingly barked at its master.

From him Marmaduke learned where Upshaw

might be found, and he spurred away eagerly toward the village, whose roofs and church spires were visible in the distance, silvered by the rising moon.

CHAPTER XXXVI

AT THE OLD TAVERN

THE stage tavern in the village was abandoned. Upshaw had quartered his handful of troops there, and in a big room, furnished with only a table and some broken chairs, he and Lockspur had taken up their abode for the night. While old Micajah was getting a fire started Lockspur went out to see about something for supper. Micajah was Upshaw's orderly, also his cook. It is true he was a poor cook, but he was a sage companion and counselor, and neither Upshaw nor Marmaduke was above considering this unlettered old man's opinion, so much was he superior to every officer in the command in years and experience. As to his mean ability as a cook, that made but little difference, for there was nothing to cook.

Upshaw sat astride of a chair, with his back to the fire, reading an old copy of the Richmond *Dispatch,* printed on wallpaper. He was not so portly as in other days; his girth was less by many inches, and his unshaven jaws were sunken.

Lockspur burst in gaily with a package of spoils. "What you reckon I've got, Dick? Sausages, by gad!"

"Impossible!" said Upshaw. "There are no sossiges in the Confederacy. There is no such thing as a sossige."

"Nevertheless," said Lockspur, "I have here some sausages. Look, Dick. Little, little sausages, fried brown, and packed away all winter in lard. A good old man gave them to me; he has sixteen kinds of stomach trouble and can't eat sausages. What do you say to that?"

"Why, I say thank God for stomach trouble!" said Upshaw, springing up. "They must be served hot, with hoe-cakes."

"Gad!" cried Lockspur, excitedly. "We haven't any hoe-cakes!"

"The ingredients of a hoe-cake are meal, a little salt and a judgment ripened by experience. I have them. A little water is also necessary. Go get the water, Micajah, and scour out the skillet. Give me them sossiges. I will assume personal command of this operation. You may trust me implicitly. By ganney!" cried Upshaw, "we shall eat once again, though the heavens fall! I wish the boss were here!"

"That's a very kind wish, Dick," said Marmaduke, earnestly.

He had followed close on Lockspur's heels and stood in the door, a pleased listener to their dialogue. They made him joyfully welcome, though his coming did not greatly surprise them; they were familiar

with his practice of appearing suddenly in unexpected places. "Have you any news?" he asked.

"The wires are down," said Lockspur. "Have you heard anything?"

"We've orders to join Lee, as quick as we can. Vertrees will be up in the morning."

Lockspur whistled. "Do you know what that means? The bottom is out of the jug."

"That is simply your opinion," said Marmaduke, who never encouraged pessimistic talk. "Couldn't you find out anything at all?"

"I heard," said Upshaw, taking off his coat to mix the batter, "I heard that the last train came clear through from Richmond."

"From Richmond!"

"Yes, by ganney, from Richmond. One of the last trains out before the town fell.— I reckon that old man never will bring that water; I'll go get some myself."

Marmaduke vigorously walked the room. For months the name of that city had possessed for him an unfailing distinction. Whenever he heard it spoken he saw at once, in his mind's eye, how it looked in Diana's handwriting, in the brief little letter she had written him. . . . "I go to Richmond." . . . Richmond! He never thought of it as the Confederate capital, but only as a place distinguished because she lived there. All the high desires of his life, all the purpose and strength of his

indomitable nature were drawn up into that one fiery passion. He was a man used to having his way; he could not believe that she had cast him off, that henceforth she was to be a part of his life only as a name and a melancholy memory. He would not let himself believe it.

The letters he wrote in Spanishburg were never answered. In the field he wrote again, and yet again. He reasoned, he pleaded; he sat late in his tent over these letters, he put his heart's blood into them — and more: he put into them the best of his mind, for he had some gift of words. The war dragged out its weary months, but there came no word from her. He decided that the Confederate postal service was not to be relied on; he sent a letter by an officer who was going to Richmond with private despatches. He was gone for two weeks. He came back reporting an unsuccessful mission. Richmond was all in a wild turmoil; he had not been able to find her. . . .

"It was a doubleheader," said Upshaw, returning with water. "Twelve coaches packed with refugees — part of the Confederate government on wheels. They tell me Jeff Davis himself was on board. There is another section behind."

"Who told you?"

"The local operator. They must have torn up the track when they cut the wires. Well, well, here's Old Thousand-Yards with the water. I've done

got my bread made, Micajah and I don't know whether I put your name in it or not."

The old man deigned no reply; he set down the water, saluted Marmaduke, and stretched his long fingers to the blaze; his gaunt shadow rose grotesquely on the wall.

"Do you-all ricollect," he asked, "the name of that feller ye ketched at Spanishburg and let git away? — Colonel Ringstreak, or some sich name. Oh, Ringstreak, I says — that ain't no ways near the name."

"Bigstaff," said Lockspur.

Micajah spat in the fire. "Bigstaff! That's the name. Well, he's a-operatin' around here, they tell me, with a passel of cavalry, a-cuttin' wires and a-burnin' tracks."

"It's your fault if he is," said Lockspur, exchanging glances with Marmaduke. Upshaw blinked casually, as who should say, that kind of thing isn't ever any surprise to me, but he did not shift his eyes from the corncakes which he had set to bake; they were already turning a golden brown.

"I reckon so," said Micajah. "I've got a heap of sins to answer fer. But I never did edzactly understand how I come to git so b'ilin' drunk that night — "

"It must have been Bigstaff's men I saw this afternoon, about ten miles from here," broke in Marmaduke.

"It's a God's wonder if they didn't see you!" declared Micajah. "You done a resky thing, ridin' through these parts by yourself. Suppose they was to trail ye?"

"That's a fair question," said Marmaduke. "Have you a good strong guard posted, Upshaw?"

"Nothing extry," said Upshaw.

"Better double it," said Marmaduke. "There's a fine moon for a night attack."

"I'll do it right after supper," said Upshaw. "Turn them sossiges into the skillet now, Micajah; we'll have this banquet ready in two shakes of a sheep's tail."

Of all the odors that may assail the nostrils of hungry men, there is none, I think, more boldly importunate than that of frying sausages. The four men who watched the sputtering skillet were not merely hungry, they were starved; their mouths twitched with primitive desire. Old Thousand-Yards set the hissing supper on the table, blowing on his fingers; and they all sat down to meat.

Lockspur did most of the talking, generally with his mouth full. Upshaw nodded at times, as if to say, "I get you," while Lockspur explained the utter hopelessness of the Southern cause, but Upshaw opened his mouth only to put food in it. Old Thousand-Yards took his supper hunkered down by the fire, where he sopped his bread in the gravy left in the skillet. He finished his meal with

startling rapidity, and having wiped the skillet clean he rose and said he would take a look at the horses.

"That's right," said Lockspur. "Keep your eye on your critter, Micajah; you may need him to plow this spring."

"Ay, law! I'd be mighty proud to git back to Tennessee and drap corn in Aprile for a spell," said the old man, and he marched out of the room. His remark set Upshaw to talking about what would become of them all if the war should end suddenly, as a curtain is rung down. "For my part, I'm liable to hit the trail for Mexico," he said, lighting up. "Would you go with me, Jack?"

"Get into that Maximilian imbroglio, do you mean? No, Dick, much as I love you, I would not. War ain't what it's cracked up to be. You may perhaps have heard me express something of the sort before. What the dowse is there in it? I'm tired of trying to save the human species with medicine and surgery and at the same time trying to destroy it with gunfire. I'm sick of spurring starved horses through the mud and shooting at people against whom I have no personal animosity whatever. I don't care a rush if I never cock a pistol again as long as I live. I want to go home," continued Lockspur. "I want to go home and sleep in a bed, and eat Christian victuals with a knife and fork, and wear clean linen, and think gentle thoughts. I'm simply burnt out on the whole

infernal business. And by the same token, so are you, Marmaduke."

"You're demoralized with overfeeding," said Marmaduke, who was studying a map. "You need some good hot work cut out for you, and by Christopher, unless something happens to disarrange my plans, you'll get it tomorrow, for I mean to put you in the advance."

"Suits me!" declared Lockspur, with his old careless laugh. "But it runs strongly in my mind that something may happen." He walked to the window and leaned against the windowframe, smoking and looking down the village roadway. In a neighboring house a girl was singing and playing the plaintive melody that sang (so some one said) the heart out of the Confederacy:

The years glide slowly by, Lorena.

The piano was old, the voice was young and cloyed with every artifice of intonation and overexpression; but the hour, the tender April moonlight, and the burden of foreboding in every heart conspired for the singer; her song rose and fell upon the night with a power and pathos infinitely sweet. A group of silent soldiers crowded the doorway; others came on tip-toe to listen, fingering their beards. When the singing stopped there was no applause; they drifted away without speaking.

Lockspur continued to lounge at the window, smoking and smiling down at the street, wondering who the singer was, and if she were pretty or interesting. The music had not touched his heart with any melancholy; he was curiously, even perversely buoyant, in anticipation of a change. He was without prospects; he faced an immediate future of poverty and hardship among a crushed and famished people, and he faced it with the old inveterate lightness of heart that all his vicissitudes could not destroy. He had given four of a man's best years to unsuccessful war, but he had no quarrel with the destiny that had so devoted him. The war had been his university of fortitude and the conduct of life; among other initiations — to name a few of which he was conscious — he had found what it meant to be simply honest and kind — a lesson so primitive that it had been somehow overlooked in the tawdry sophistication of his earlier days; he had acquired the art of being grateful — a most unusual achievement; and he had learned that if a man will perseveringly take thought of what is due from him to others and the world itself, he shall escape the tragedy of the inferior man, which is bitter brooding upon what others and the world have so unjustly denied him.

These things and many others he had learned, with a sense of discovery, as though they were mint-new and momentous, and hitherto unheard of!

Marmaduke looked up suddenly. A sound caught his ear — the distant whistle of the train from Richmond. It affected him strangely, though he gave no sign; he folded his map quietly, without any rustle, straining his ears to catch again that faint and far-off challenge, which called to him personally out of the night, rousing within him a wild fantastic hope, vivid, compelling, madly improbable — it was as though that deep voice had breathed her name. The sound was lost in a sudden clatter of hoofs; an orderly entered from the street. He was a thing of rags, but he advanced with a dashing salute.

"The wires are working again, sir," said he, "and this despatch has just come. The operator wants to know what to tell him."

The despatch read: "Track now repaired — is all safe? — Can I come on?" It was signed by the conductor of the westbound train. Even as Marmaduke read it, he heard again, more distinctly, the whistle of the far-off engine. "She's blowing in now, sir!" cried the orderly, and he set off at a run. Marmaduke's impulse was to follow him hotfoot, but he rose with some deliberation and buckled on his sidearms.

"Will you walk down to the station with me, Jack?" In spite of his ostentatious calm his voice betrayed excitement. "Upshaw, you spoke of strengthening the guard, I think."

"Going right now," said Upshaw. "Guard duty

has got to be a joke in this outfit here lately. I've got to twist somebody's tail, I see that sticking out."

"That sounds very familiar, Upshaw," laughed Marmaduke; his one criticism of his senior brigadier was that he was quite incapable of punishing his soldiers. It was a fault he understood but too well, for Marmaduke himself was notoriously soft hearted and more than once he had ordered men to be shot for gross neglect of duty, only to end by letting the culprits go with a fatherly lecture. "If I get any news I will send you word," he said; and with Lockspur he set out down the street, the two making a great clatter of spurs.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE SURPRISE

THE night had fallen mild and sweet. A small group of cavalrymen lounged about the station, and the operator, a big, bearded soldier, sat plugging at his instrument, vainly endeavoring to get an answer to the telegram of inquiry that Upshaw had filed with him that afternoon. An ominous mystery surrounded the Army of Northern Virginia; communication had been interrupted for many hours.

The bell of the train was heard, and presently its headlight shone down the track; slowly and cautiously it drew in to the station. The locomotive was brought to a stop at a woodpile to take on fuel, and as the engineer descended from his cab with torch and oil-can both Marmaduke and Lockspur recognized the purple round face and bulging eyes of an old friend. "Hello, Windy," said Marmaduke, quietly.

"Well, by gravy!" roared the engineer, falling back a little. You might think that Mr. Marquis, being a railroad man, would be so well used to meeting up with old acquaintances every day that he would take it casually, but that was not his way.

Neither time nor experience could dull the obstreperous rapture of surprise with which, under any circumstance, he greeted any body he knew. "You can drag me through torment and beat me with a sootbag, if it ain't Gineral Marmaduke!" he bellowed. "And my eyes deceive me, too, if this ain't Doctor Lockspur! Well, by *gravy!*"

"How's railroading, Windy?" asked the Doctor.

"Railroadin's gone all to hell!" declared the engineer, cheerfully. "If I ain't had a time gittin' here with this moon-eyed and broken-winded old fool of an injine, my name ain't Windy Marquis!" He reached out his hand and stroked the boiler of the faithful animal thus maligned, which stood puffing in iron insensibility to its master's unkind remarks.

"What are you hauling, Windy?" asked Marmaduke.

"Ast me what I ain't a-haulin'," cried the engineer, "and I'll come nigher tellin' ye! This here's a Gover'ment train. Refugees from Richmond," he pursued, waving his hand. "Senators," he specified, swelling with importance. "Cabinet Officers. Atta-chees."

"Atta-chees?" queried Lockspur. "Oh, *attachés.*"

"That's what I said," declared Mr. Marquis, glaring. "Atta-chees."

"What's in the boxcars?" asked Lockspur.

Mr. Marquis made an effort to whisper his reply.

"Arch-ives!" he declared, thickly. "Gover'ment

arch-ives. From the War Department. Arch-ives! Them boxcars," he continued, "was at Lynchburg, loaded with provisions for General Lee's army. The Gover'ment wanted them boxcars to load with these here arch-ives, and them cymlin' heads down there trundled 'em on to Richmond without ever lookin' to see what was in 'em. That's how come Lee's men is down there on the river starvin' to death. I'd like to sidetrack the blame' things." Mr. Marquis had a very vague idea of the nature of archives in general, but he appeared to favor the notion that they were some kind of produce. "I wouldn't be surprised if they ain't sp'iled by this time anyway."

"Totally ruined," said Marmaduke, gravely. "Do you happen to know if Congressman Fortune is on board?"

"I don't know," said Windy. "He might be. I never took no notice. There now!" he added, as Marmaduke hurried off to board the nearest car. "He's gone, and I never got to tell him all about Lee's army."

"Well, what about Lee's army?" demanded Lockspur.

"Lee's army," said Mr. Marquis. "Lee's army — well, sir — " He paused and drew a deep breath; words seemed to fail him. "Lee's army is blamed nigh gone out of business," he declared.

"Is it true they are in full retreat from Petersburg?"

"Retreat from Petersburg? Say, Doc, where have you been all the time? Why, Doc, they've done forgot where Petersburg was! What's left of them is down in the South Side somewhere, with nothin' to eat. Lee's army!" — Mr. Marquis paused impressively — "Why, Doc, the God's truth is there ain't no Lee's army! There's nothin' up in them parts but Yankee soldiers — millions and billions of Yankee soldiers. The furder I git from them, the better it suits me." He laid his hand affectionately on the pilot. "I'll ride this baby as long as I see iron rails in front, and then I'll take to the woods." He broke off shortly and stared.

"Now, what's that?" he cried. "Them ain't Marmaduke's boys, air they?"

Lockspur gave one swift glance in the direction indicated by the engineer's staring eyes.

"No, by gad! Jump for your engine, Windy! Pull out, pull out, pull *out!*" And without more words he took to his heels. A cavalryman feels powerless without his horse, and Lockspur ran with remarkable swiftness in the direction of the old tavern.

It was with difficulty that Marmaduke made his way through the car he had boarded. It was filled with people, disposed over the cramped seats in every posture of weariness and discomfort. Some were awake and talking, some were asleep and snor-

ing; all were blowsy and haggard, and the car reeked with the sickly odor of unventilated humanity. The wild hope that by some golden fortuity he might find Diana Fortune there perished as he pushed his way along the aisle; it became impossible to think of her as a part of this demoralized and fetid cargo. Once, indeed, he was almost sure that he saw, under a smoky lamp, the serene face of Mr. John Fortune, but when he came abreast he saw that it was a man unlike him in every way; it was only the ardent wish that had fathered the thought of any resemblance.

He struggled to the front of the car. Hanging near the door was a woman's gray cloak, a somewhat threadbare garment lined with scarlet. His physical senses quickened at the sight of the thing; that it was Diana's old burnoose his heart was swift to recognize, it leaped gladly and drummed in his breast. His mind, however, moved more slowly; he stared for a moment. A small brown hand reached up to take it down. Then his attention was claimed by a sudden wild commotion which swept through the car. There were shouts and screams and a meaningless struggle.

"What's the excitement?" he asked, as the conductor plunged shouldering past him.

"Yanks!" was the reply.

Marmaduke savagely fought his way out on the platform; he heard above the tumult the rattle of musket fire. The wheels of the locomotive, first

spinning and grinding, bit the track suddenly, and the heavy train, crying out as though in panic, shot instantly forward in the night. When Marmaduke reached the steps the train was rushing over a rocky fill, swaying with increasing speed; a leap was no hazard here, it was death. The bellrope was within reach, but the speed of the train had swept it far on its way before it answered his vigorous pulls. Even as the momentum perceptibly slackened he heard an angry countermanding whistle and felt the couplers lengthen and tauten. He swung off.

As he fell, a voice cried out his name.

He fell into a pit of blackness, which swallowed him up. So it seemed at least to a woman who leaped after him, stumbling into a mass of dead briers beside the track — a woman in a gray burnoose. She rose and stood looking after the train as it grew indistinct in the distance, and at the clouds and stars, and that yawning gulf below the embankment. Then she called, frightened and trembling: "Henry!"

No one answered and she cried again, "Henry!" Still no one answered, and with a sob she sprang down into the shadow, calling again, "Henry! Oh, are you there? Can't you speak! Oh, answer me! — Henry! Henry!"

At last there was some inarticulate sound in a man's voice, and she came at once upon Marmaduke at the bottom of the embankment. He had been

stunned, and was sitting up, passing his hand over his forehead. He did not speak at first, being dazed; and she asked him twice, in her rapid speech, "Are you hurt? Are you hurt?"

"No, I think not," said he, carelessly.

"Oh, my God!" The tragic voice quavered as though with disappointment.

But Marmaduke rose to his feet, slowly, and stared at her, in a strained, bewildered way, and then he uttered softly a passionate cry.

"Diana! Oh, is it you, my love, is it you?"

"Yes."

"Oh, how came you here?"

"I saw you fall, I thought you would be killed, I could not bear it — I jumped!"

She struggled away, pushing aside his hands. "Please don't — don't touch me!"

She ran a little way from him and stood shivering, helplessly, her face in her hands.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

A NIGHT OF SPRING

IT WAS the freshest of spring nights, soft as midsummer, and sweet with wild plum blossoms. The moon sailed high overhead among great white clouds and silver stars. The firing at Mabingdon had ceased, and here the silence was almost absolute; what sounds arose were but confederates of the stillness; the ceaseless whistle of the spring frogs, the hylas — and a soft crash of wind in the pines.

"This is very wonderful," he said.

"Oh, it is miserable!" she cried.

"Was your father on that train?"

"No."

"You were traveling alone?"

"Yes."

The firing at the station broke out again, and sank away, and there followed the sound of cheering — not the familiar whoop of grayjackets, but a deep huzzah! The sky was lighted with fire.

"What does that mean?" she asked.

"My men are captured or driven out. Come, we must go."

"Where?"

He did not answer at once, but stood listening to

the noise of skirmishing in the woods not far away. These sounds presently died away.

"I must get you to a house," he said, "and then find a horse and go for help."

"Where is help?"

"Vertrees is at Willow Springs, twelve miles away, with most of my troops. I had only a few men here."

"I am a block and chain to you! And I meant to help you! Leave me — no one will harm a woman —"

"Hush," he whispered. They had left the railway and reached a road running along beside it; he led her into the woods a little way as the noise of hoofs sounded on the road. Three riders were coming from Mabingdon, and, as they swept by, Marmaduke saw that one was a large man, and one was gaunt and bearded, and the last wore glasses that gleamed in the moonlight.

"Lockspur! Hold!" he shouted. But the clatter of hoofs drowned his voice; the riders did not pause.

They were scarcely out of earshot when a squad of mounted men came after them, apparently in pursuit.

"Party went into the woods, thar, Colonel!" cried one. "I seed 'em!"

"Throw a little lead after them," was the order. The discharge of pistols and carbines followed.

"Oh, come on!" said another. "What's the use of shooting at the wide, wide world?"

"Well, I'm always missing something," said the officer in command. "It would be just my luck if not only Marmaduke but Jeff Davis and the whole Confederate Government were on that train. Pick up all the stragglers you can. I'm a-going back." He turned his horse and disappeared; the others trotted forward.

"Are you hurt?" whispered Marmaduke.

"No," said Diana, shivering.

"Are you cold?"

"No!" She pressed his arm. "Henry! That man! Did you see him?"

"I heard his voice. No one could mistake it. Our little bantam of the Great Smoky Mountains."

"Barney Bigstaff!" she cried.

"Can you walk faster?" he said. "Can you run?"

She released his arm, caught up her skirts and ran beside him.

Moving thus they turned out of the road into a belt of open wood, and emerging presently from this they entered a wide meadow, watered by a spring branch. In the middle of this meadow was a large cedar, standing solitary upon rising ground. Toward this (for want of knowing whither else to go) he directed their course; and when they reached its cover he paused, observing that Diana was gasping.

"Let us rest here a moment," he said, and dropped upon the grass. She sat down beside him, catching her breath in rapid respirations. "It is long since I ran like that," she breathed, half laughing, her hand to her bosom.

"It was best to get away from the road," he explained.

He reached out his hand and touched hers; she caught his fingers, pressed them lightly and released them quickly. He did not know where to turn or what to do, but difficulties seemed to matter so little, with her at his side, touching his hand. When his throbbing pulses quieted a little he realized that, after all, there was not much to do but to lie close and wait. To return to Mabingdon would be to give himself up, and he knew that there were three, at least, who had escaped, to carry the news to Vertrees.

"When it clouds up again we will go on," he said. "We should get deeper into the woods."

"You said something about getting a horse," she said.

"It is not necessary now. Did you notice the first three men who passed us? — they were Upshaw, Lockspur, and old Micajah Lea."

"Micajah!" she murmured, but there was no room in her heart for any petty amazement. Watching the flying clouds and hearing his voice, she breathed deep, her soul caught up and thrilling

with the supreme wonder of being with him, alone, in this night of spring.

"They will take the word," he said. "Meanwhile, I don't know anything better to do than to lie close."

"This isn't very close, here, is it?" she smiled.

"No. We must get deeper into the woods. Those people might take a fancy to beat up the fields, on their way back."

Diana made no immediate rejoinder; she sat looking up at the great world of clouds; her lips were parted, her eyes were luminous, and her face, pale beneath masses of dark hair, was altogether lovely. "Now it seems as though the moon were obscured, and now it bounds out brighter than before," she observed.

"When I was a small boy," he said, "I used to lie just so and watch the moon in the clouds. I didn't know it was the clouds that moved; I thought of the moon as a sharp disc, that *scoured* through the clouds, like a plow, and this scouring made it seem brighter every time it came out. I have always thought of it that way."

It appeared to her quite right that he should speak of adventitious things: she could bear anything better than to talk of something relevant or personal. And, curiously, she appeared to herself as a little child sitting beside this strong man in the meadow, trusting to him, ready to do as he said, to sit or

stand or run with him through the fields and wood, or to talk of the moon and clouds. The smell of the blossoming wild plums and the pipe of the wood frogs, the whistling hylas of the spring, became a part of their talk, and when, after a minute of darkness, the cleaving moon flamed out with sudden splendor upon a sea of blue, she clapped her hands for pleasure, seeing the thing as he saw it in his boyish fancy. "Oh, it does make it brighter!" she cried. "Brighter than ever!"

He stood up, extending his hand. "We'll have to take chances. Let's make a dash for the woods yonder."

She caught his fingers and they ran forward. At first she ran nimbly, but more than once, before they reached the woods, he had to lessen his speed for her, and when they gained the dense shadows of the trees she sank at once upon the ground. "I know you will think very poorly of me," she panted, "but I'm a bit dizzy — everything goes 'round."

"Diana," he said, "what have you had to eat today?"

"I had a piece of bread this morning," she said.

His heart leaped into his throat, with tender love and compassion. "You poor child!" he murmured; he put his hand upon her arm. "Let me carry you."

"Indeed no!" she cried. "I'm not ill — I'm just lightheaded."

"There must be a house in the woods," he said. "I caught a glimpse of a light."

"I can walk," she said, rising. "You know that die-away feeling when — you — know — "

"I know something about it," he said, gently, and with his arm supporting her they went into the woods. It was an open grove, filled with black shadows and pierced with shafts of moonlight. He, too, was lightheaded, walking in Elysium; her slender waist was warm in the firm fold of his arm. She disengaged herself when they came to the house, whose light shone through the trees. It was a plain country home, with lilacs in the yard, glistening with dew in the moonlight, and profuse with bloom. The light issued from the blazing hearth through the door, which stood wide open. No one answered Marmaduke's summons; the place seemed deserted. As they crossed the road in front of the house he saw, with a cavalry officer's quick eye for such signs, that the road was heavily trampled.

"There has been fighting here — look!" He picked up a cartridge shell from a breech-loading rifle much in favor with the Federal cavalry. "I think some of my boys escaped this way — and got well peppered, too, I suppose. Let's go in."

There was no one at home. The clock on the mantel ticked peacefully, a cricket was keening somewhere about the hearth. Before the fire a table was set with a few dishes, and it was plain to see that

whosoever lived in that humble, clean little home had been frightened from it in the midst of preparations for supper.

Diana ran at once to the fireplace. "Poor souls, they have left the kettle to burn!" she cried. In the work of rescue she scorched her finger, and she stood touching it to her lips and looking at Marmaduke in the bright light with a suddenly awakened consciousness of herself and of him. In the moonlit fields and darkling woods she had adventured with him as in a dream, but the lighted house brought a sense of reality and aroused the woman's undying sensibility to convention and propriety. She remembered in a kind of panic the wild impulse that had brought her into this situation; she flushed, and then grew very pale.

Marmaduke's feelings apparently were more matter-of-fact. "I must get you some food," he said, deeply concerned at the pallor that overspread her face. "Sit down there; I'll forage in the kitchen."

He returned presently with a pitcher and a glass tumbler. "I've found a jug of milk!" he proclaimed, jubilantly. His manner was boyishly natural, he seemed utterly oblivious of anything out of the ordinary in their being together there. "I've got the reputation of being a robber and freebooter," he declared as he filled the glass for her, "but I swear to you, Diana, I never did steal milk before. Now, to cap my many crimes and plunderings, I'm

a milk thief, by Christopher! Marmaduke the infamous milk stealer! Marmaduke the buttermilk ranger! — and you are *particeps criminis!* Take some more, pal! Might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb — have another glass! Come!"

She smiled and held out the empty glass in silence, and he refilled it. But she put down the glass without tasting it, asking suddenly: "Wouldn't it be safe for me to remain here alone?"

"Why do you ask?"

"But wouldn't it?"

"Why, as for that, I suppose you would be as secure here as anywhere in Virginia," he said.

"Then go," she said. "Go and do what you think you should do. What a creature you must think me — to keep you here looking after my comfort when the safety of your whole command may depend upon your exertions tonight! Truly, Henry, I can take care of myself — I am not at all afraid! I beg you to go! No one will harm me — "

"Hush!" he said. There sounded, distantly, yet distinctly, the familiar jingle and tramping of approaching cavalry. He said nothing but turned quietly to the window and drew the curtains; they were ragged and transparent; he sprang without hesitation to the hearth, and seizing the fire shovel quickly extinguished the flames with ashes. Then he spoke rapidly in the sudden obscurity:

"If any one questions you, tell them the facts,

but give no names. Do not stir from here until I return. Good-by!"

He made for the door. On the threshold he turned. The room was faintly illumined, she stood in the dim red glow of the smothered coals, her hand to her bosom. He whirled swiftly back to her, caught her wildly to him, kissed her again and again, and was gone.

Diana stood where he released her, with the continuing sense of his rough embrace, lips and cheeks yet burning with his quick passionate kisses. She heard his light footstep as he cleared the porch, and then within the room fell a thick momentous silence, upon which the slow ticking clock made no impression. She sank into her chair and sat upright and rigid, hands clenched together upon her knee. Her whole body throbbed with the swift insistent pounding of her heart.

The cavalry drew nearer, came abreast of the house; she all but held her breath. For a moment it seemed as though they were actually passing, and she began to breathe again. But the cavalry had not gone on, they had halted. She heard as in a hateful dream a shouting in the woods. Instantaneously the night was alive with the clamor of soldiers touched into action: oaths and quick commands, and the thunder of galloping hoofs. More distantly shot after shot rang out spitefully in the woods and one persistent voice cried, "Halt! Halt!"

Diana was already out of the house when the firing began. She had no thought of herself, she had no clear thought of anything but to go to Henry Marmaduke. The troopers were galloping here and yonder; she saw the spurting flashes of carbines through the trees, and with a gasping sob of despair she ran forward.

A heavy hand caught her arm. "Steady! Keep back, lady." The soldier who detained her slid quietly from his saddle to her side, without losing his vice-like grip on her arm. As he spoke the far-away voice rang out again: "Halt! *halt!* HALT! damn ye!" There were successive swift shots, a pause, and one more shot.

"I guess he got him," said the cavalryman; he was still clutching her arm.

"Oh, let me go! let me go! let me go!" she cried, wildly. The soldier thrust his arm through the reins and held her with both hands.

She soon ceased to struggle. She stood trembling and white, and when the man asked her, with a touch of pity in his voice, "Was he a friend of your'n?" she made no answer. She did not notice that the tumult was lessening, or that the soldiers were coming in to their horses; it seemed to her that she was dead, and the world had stopped. "You need not hold me any longer," she said, presently. "I will stay here, if you wish."

She did not start, but stood immovable when two

men emerged from the shadows, bearing a third between them. As they turned toward the house Diana ran to them.

"Henry!" she moaned. "Henry!"

She was roughly thrust aside, but as she followed them up the steps the man's head fell between their shoulders and his face showed clear in the moonlight. It was the face of a stranger.

"Set him down here," said one of the bearers. "His name hain't Henry, mom."

"Did she call him Henry?" asked the other, and laughed, slowly and good-naturedly; and he called to an officer who came behind. "Captain, did ye hear that? She called him Henry!"

"Who's hurt?" demanded the officer. "Oh, it's you, Mack! Are you badly injured, Mack?"

"Don't talk to me," said the wounded man. "I'm all shot up, but hit hain't no killin' thing, neither — leastways, ef hit is, I don't sense it as sich. But what was the name the lady spoke?"

"She called him Henry," said the first speaker.

"Henry," repeated Mack. "Well, I couldn't hit him no more'n I could hit a ha'nt! He was the *roughest* dam' man I've met up with sence I tuck to so'jerin' — he shot me out'n my saddle and he frailed me over the head with his pistol, and that hain't all! By Johnny, he tuck my horse! Tuck my horse, by Johnny, and lit out through them woods like the devil on horseback! She called him Henry,

did she? Well, you kin thank God the woods hain't full of sich Henries! Why don't ye git me a doctor? Air ye goin' to let me lay here and die, with my life blood runnin' from me like sap from a sugar-tree?"

"Your voice is too strong — you won't die," said the officer. "But you missed your dip when you let that fellow get away. He might be somebody in particular. Take him in the house, boys." He turned to Diana. "Do you live here, young woman?"

She sat on the low step of the porch in the shadow, into which, instinctively, she had retreated. There, in the grateful obscurity, she had come to life again, crying for joy, and holding her hand to a heart that leaped exultantly from abysmal depths of terror to speed a flying horseman, mile after mile. She rose when the officer spoke to her and stepped out into the moonlight, star-eyed and smiling. The captain was surprised and even flustered. He took off his hat. "Why, excuse me, madam!" he said. "I asked if you lived here, but of course you don't."

"How do you know?" She asked merely for the sake of the question, knowing that she must either ask or answer. The captain, however, did not reply; the subtle incongruity between the common little cabin and this goddess among the lilacs was too much for him; he shook his head, firmly set his hat upon it, and was about to ask another question, when

Diana forestalled him: "Is there anything I can do? Won't you let me help with that injured man?"

"The boys can manage, I reckon. They are used to it."

"I'm sure," said Diana, feeling the necessity of general conversation, "I'm sure you've seen a great deal of hard fighting, haven't you?"

"A right smart," said the captain.

Diana's nerves were quivering with reaction: her feelings were strung like a windharp, responsive to a breath. "A right smart," repeated the officer; the homely phrase of the Southern hills filled her with gentle laughter. It was a purely nervous expression, not of merriment but of happiness. "A right smart!" she echoed, absently; old associations and present impressions mingled in her mind; she thought of mountain laurel, old sunny days in Tennessee, and Henry Marmaduke riding away to his friends in this refulgent night of spring. But the captain was sensitive.

"Well, there hain't nothing funny about it, that I can see," he said, resentfully.

"Oh!" Diana was shocked at the thought of hurting his feelings. "I didn't mean — I wasn't laughing at you — what you said made me think of home! You see," she added, wishing to make the apology generously fair, "you see, I am from Tennessee, too!"

"Air ye?" said the captain. "And what might your name be?"

"It isn't necessary to tell you that, is it?"

"Well, no," said the officer, with a certain briskness. He spoke in the manner of one who had suddenly resolved to wash his hands of a troublesome business. "Hatfield!" he called. "Take this lady up to headquarters."

"Oh, what for?" cried Diana. "What have I done?"

The officer had already taken refuge in the masculine redoubt of silence; he turned away, and the soldier whom he called Hatfield presently brought two horses. "This one is for you," he said. "Can you set in a man's saddle?"

"But I don't want to go!" she cried.

The soldier grinned, and Diana debated the matter swiftly in her mind. Private Hatfield's leathery face expressed no indecision; he was just the man to execute orders. She decided to submit gracefully.

"You have taken the best horse for yourself," she said.

"I'll change with ye," said the other, amicably, and she perceived now that he was the man whose iron grip on her arm had detained her in the road.

"Thank you," she said; and somewhat to the soldier's surprise she sprang unaided to the saddle. Private Hatfield was equally quick; he was instantly mounted and rode by her side, observing with

approval her skilful adaptation of the stirrups. "This hain't the fust time you have rode in a man's saddle," he remarked.

"Why am I to be taken to headquarters?" she demanded, abruptly.

"I don't know," was the answer, "without it's because the Colonel give orders to take up all suspicious persons."

"Am I a suspicious person?"

"Yes, mom."

Diana laughed joyously. To be taken before Barney Bigstaff had at first seemed to her an insupportable trial; she had shrunk before it pitifully, dreading indignities and shame. But now, seated securely on a horse, a good horse, as she was quick to discover, her fear and consternation vanished. Self-confidence came to her, and something more — a wild recklessness. Her companion's horse moved stiffly and stumblingly; hers lifted his feet nimbly, and when Diana drew the rein close upon his neck and leaned forward he surged ahead responsively. And almost before she could form the thought she was burning with the resolution to break away and escape.

Her pulse beat high upon the daring determination; she rode in a kind of intoxication. They went out past the woods through which she had come with Marmaduke, they entered the meadow and rode along the creek. The little stream ran tinkling and

singing; she could hear, in imagination, the hoof-beats of Marmaduke's horse far away on the moonlit road, and those of her own horse, too, as she madly followed him. It was a desperate, foolish thing to attempt, but she could not resist. Trepidation had now no part in her emotions; her heart was so hot upon the thing that fear could not chill it.

Now they passed the lone cedar in the midst of the meadow; a few rods further on was the highway beside the railway, where they would turn to go into the village. That would be the place, she decided — there she would wheel suddenly and fly.

The reins trembled in her hands, her eyes grew big with resolution. At this point the cavalryman laid his hand upon the reins. "I expect I'd better lead ye," he said quietly.

"Oh, but why?" she protested, almost angrily.

"I've seed fillies fixin' to shy before," said he.

Diana's bosom rose and fell quickly. In the grasp of this placid soldier her resolution died, but it died hard. She did not speak for several minutes, and she was still a little breathless when she asked, at last, "Did you think I meant to run away?"

"Didn't ye?" asked the other.

"I did," she admitted. "Would you have shot me?"

"No."

"Why?"

Private Hatfield knew several reasons, one of

which was that she was a woman, but he gave another. "You are too pretty," he said, gravely.

Diana had been reared on compliments; to have her beauty remarked upon was her earliest recollection, and she was so well used to these tributes that she knew how to accept them graciously — a rare accomplishment. This night she had suffered many vicissitudes of adventure and emotion; she felt her complexion distempered and her dignity disheveled: the soldier's homage was like a cordial. She pushed back the hood of her burnoose. "Oh, do you think I am pretty?" she cried.

He gave the mountaineer's sole standard. "Pretty as red shoes."

"After that," she said, "you may take your hand from my bridle. I won't try to run away. I promise."

He dropped the reins instantly. She thanked him, and they rode on in silence. Now and then the moon flashed out, now it plunged darkly into the streaming tide of clouds. Diana watched it till she was dizzy, thinking of her intrepid lover and his imperious kisses, and wondering if he, too, looked up at the moon as he rode away in the night.

Presently they entered the village. The acrid smoke of burning timbers filled the streets. Diana was set down at the railway station.

Here were brustling fires of crossties. The work of destruction was going forward briskly. The

colonel in command of the raiding force was riding up and down, commanding, cursing, praising, bullying; Diana recognized him by his low stature, his broad back, his red hair, and the way he cocked his hat. His voice was hoarse with shouting. Diana was kept waiting a very long time — hours, it seemed to her — before he paid any attention to the soldier or his captive.

She sat in the shadow upon a goods box on the station platform, her back to Bigstaff and the light of the fires. Covertly she saw him talking to the sergeant; carelessly, almost idly, she began to arrange her always obstreperous hair, which lay disordered about her ears. It was futile, without brush and comb, to attempt to restore the severe coiffure of the day, and brush and comb and all her other little belongings were on the train. But there was something she could do with it that was even better. She pulled out the few remaining pins, flung open the scarlet-lined cloak, and with a shoveling motion of her hands and a toss of her head, let the plenteous masses tumble in a darkling cascade over her bosom. She required no mirror to tell her that the result was striking. She had practiced it in her bedroom more than once. This done she rose and strolled slowly, still with her back to Bigstaff.

He stepped up briskly. "I sent you out after rebel soldiers," he was saying. "And this is what you bring me — a woman!"

Diana turned about and with an air of the utmost indifference, moved out into the bright illumination, confronting him. It was a theatrical act, but it was not wholly deliberate; she did it almost unconsciously, under the pressing need of appearing to the best advantage.

Upon Bigstaff the effect, for the moment, was overwhelming; he could say nothing at all. "I certainly wasn't looking to see you here," he broke out at last

Diana did not answer.

"What are you doing here — I mean, how do you happen to be here?"

"I don't think I care to explain to you," she said.

"It looks mighty curious — I don't quite see through it," he said, recovering his self-possession. "I was told that Marmaduke was here with only a corporal's guard of troops, and got away on the train. I didn't believe it, but seeing you here gives some color to it."

"Does it?" said Diana.

"Are you traveling with the rebel cavalry?" he asked.

"I am traveling home to Tennessee from Richmond, Colonel Bigstaff," she said, quietly. "I left the train that your men attacked."

"I see," said he. "You got off here to meet Marmaduke."

"I didn't say that," she said.

"But I did. And Marmaduke wouldn't have left you. He didn't get out on that train."

"You may take my word for it, he did!" she declared.

Instantly she winced at the enormity of the blunder, for how could she, taken in the woods, and far from the station, be supposed to know?

But Bigstaff was waiting such an opening; the slip was overlooked. He laughed.

"I may take your word!"

She had seated herself on the goods box. He sat down near her.

"I am sorry," he said, in the manner of a banker rejecting a check, "but your word is quite worthless with me."

She had expected something like this, but she was not discomposed. She was even glad of the diversion, as a relief from his keen inquisition.

"Indeed, I do not blame you much for that, Colonel Bigstaff," she said. "But then you don't know."

"Don't know?" He lighted the stump of his cigar. "I'm just a common mountain boy. I never had any education, except what I could get by digging out at night by the light of the pine knots; there wasn't any schools up in Tuckaleechee Cove. I read law some and took to practicing up in Sevier County. Old Judge Marmaduke gave me my license the same time Henry Marmaduke got his, but I was never acquainted with Henry Marmaduke

— he traveled outside of my record, speaking before the Supreme Court and such. I was just a sage-brush lawyer, and he was one of the bluebloods. He had his career cut out for him; I've had to make mine. I dug ginseng, I traded cattle, I read history, I made speeches in lawsuits about dogs and spoke in criminal trials till my name got to going around the mountain, and when the war broke out I raised a regiment."

He paused and relighted his cigar. "Excuse me," he said, clamping the cigar in his powerful jaws, "I didn't aim to give you my autobiography. Up to the time I met you in Spanishburg, I had never known a lady. It's a fact that I always thought my mother was a lady — she was a good woman, and a wise woman, but she went barefoot, and used a snuffstick, and eat with her knife. But she sold beeswax and feathers in Sevierville to buy me books, and what she did eat with her knife was what was left after the children had enough. Yes, I think I could safely say she was a lady."

"I see you are going to make this hard for me," said Diana.

"But you were a lady of quality," he pursued, relentlessly. "You seemed to me to link up together all that was fine. I had read a good deal of poetry and romances — you were the living picture of it all. I had more respect for you than any other person I knew. I always tried to imagine what you would

think or say about anything I did, and sometimes imagining this made me do different. And then one day," he concluded grimly, "one day, like any woman of the common run, on your word of honor, you lied to me."

Diana drew a deep breath. "And you will never forgive me?"

"Never while the sun shines," he said, quietly and bitterly.

She shivered. "I did treat you badly," she said, with assumed lightness. "How did it affect you?"

"Affect me?" he cried. "It cost me a capture — a prize which would have made me a brigadier; it cost me my command, my liberty, almost. And," he added, pausing once more to relight his cigar, "it cost me the feeling that there was anybody I could trust."

"You have been wrongly used," said Diana. "But what were your feelings when you were helped to escape?" She moved aside to avoid the acrid smoke of his oft-relighted cigar.

"Helped to escape? I helped myself. My guards got full — I laid one of them out. The other was too dead drunk to interfere."

"Do you know how they happened to get intoxicated?"

"Natural proclivity," said he.

"I think it is your right to know," she said. "It may help you to think better of me. It was I who

gave them the whiskey, so that you might escape."

He stared at her. "What? Why?"

"I had done you a wrong, as you so well remember. I wanted to do you a kindness, to square myself."

"Good Lord!" he cried, in genuine scorn and derision. "What a lie!"

"It is easy to call a woman a liar," she observed.

His manner changed. "I beg your pardon. It is cowardly. I beg your pardon."

"Colonel Barney Bigstaff," she said, "you are something of a diamond in the rough, I think. Some day you will discover, I hope, that he who cannot forgive any merely human thing has n't learned how to live."

"The time has passed for moral instruction from you," he said. "I don't know why I sit here palavering. You'd fill me with lies about Marmaduke right now."

"Do you think so? But tell me — did it never occur to you — wouldn't you do the same, to save a friend?"

He turned savagely. "Then you have lied to me! Marmaduke is right here, and you've kept me — Orderly!" he shouted. "My compliments to the adjutant and tell him to come here, and come a-running! I'll comb this country with a fine-tooth comb — I'll put every man on the trail — I'll *get* him!"

Diana became thoroughly frightened. She knew

that Marmaduke was now miles away, but still, perhaps, within reach of well mounted pursuers. If swift horsemen went out at once they might overtake him.

Bigstaff did not observe her. He grew suddenly indifferent to her existence. He had risen and stood listening, as though to some distant sound.

"What is it?" she asked.

He gave her an ugly look, and turned away quickly. "Here, you," he said to a drowsing bugler. "Blow the call to arms!"

There brattled upon the air distinctly now the desultory banging of carbines and the chiming of hoofs. The significance of that tumult struck Diana all at once. She leaped to her feet. The pickets were coming in!

Bigstaff, pulling on his gauntlets as he ran, vaulted quickly in the saddle, drew his saber and dashed away. As the bugle blared, the working details threw down their implements and rallied to their horses.

Out of the night there galloped a vedette in the lead of all the rest; there was a ring of terror in his voice as he shouted loudly: "Marmaduke's coming!"

"You lie!" shouted Bigstaff.

"As God is my witness!" cried the vedette. "Marmaduke's men are coming — all of them! Three brigades in solid colyum! — I tell ye — "

His voice was lost in the clatter and shouting as his fellows of the picket came up.

"Marmaduke is coming!" they yelled. "Get to your horses and save your skins! They're not a mile away — Marmaduke's whole division!"

Bigstaff strove gallantly but vainly to stay the tide of panic. Diana was jostled by a swirl of men and deafened by the clamor of voices; she heard all around her yells, and the clash of weapons and the roar of running feet. The name of Marmaduke was upon every lip, and there was hurried mounting and forming — not for battle but for flight. They were not cowards; they were gallant soldiers. But soldiers and civilians alike are moved less by the facts of life than by names and prepossessions, and so this regiment of troopers gave way in consternation before an advancing terror that was in truth but a shadow — a few hundred ragged horsemen and the fame of a valiant man.

And Diana stood for a little space in the midst of the confusion, her heart swelling fit to burst with pride and tender love and devilish exultation; then a bullet struck the wall behind her, and she ran into the station house.

Far away at Willow Springs, Vertrees had seen the fire, and suspecting mischief to his chief, put every man in the saddle. On the road they met Upshaw and Lockspur, who begged them to hurry; later they met other fugitives, some of them

Marmaduke with his veterans thundered down the street

wounded; halfway to Mabingdon they met Marmaduke himself.

There was little resistance. Diana through the doorway saw the retreat of Bigstaff's men as Marmaduke with his veterans thundered down the street, which was bright with the light of the fires. They fired from their saddles, and their hoarse cheering, so it seemed to her, filled the place with music — "I!" — "I!" — "I!" She saw Marmaduke plainly as they plunged in pursuit past the station house — a clear but fleeting glimpse. All at once, with an incredible suddenness, the noise in the street was over. The yelling of the cavalry grew softer in the distance — "I!" — "I!" — "I!"

No one ever heard that cry again.

A comparative stillness fell upon the street. People came out of the houses, talking, some excitedly, some in low tones. Diana stood in the door of the station house, her cheeks wet; the night, the place, the world itself seemed deliriously unreal.

A man appeared from somewhere, a bearded tall soldier in the uniform of a Confederate officer. He brushed past Diana without a word and went to the telegraph instrument, which Bigstaff's men, in their haste, forgot to destroy. He sat down and began vigorously sounding a call. It seemed a long time before he had a reply, but Diana saw him lean over at last as though something caught his attention; and he began taking a message with a pencil. Then he

rose and stared at Diana in a dazed way, as though he did not see her.

"What is the matter?" she asked. He looked at her curiously, but did not answer, and she saw that he was pale and that his chin was trembling under his beard. Once or twice he strode up and down, and then, rather suddenly, he flung himself upon the table, giving way to a passionate burst of grief. Diana went to him, but when she saw the message lying by his side she knew there was nothing she could say to him. The message ran simply: "General Lee has surrendered."

To her the news brought no shock. Her feelings had been so wrought upon that they could not fully respond to it. The Southern cause was now forever lost, and yet it seemed an impersonal thing. She understood the soldier's despair and grief, but in her own heart there was no despair and no grief, nor any other emotion but bewildering gladness that the end had come — the war was over, and Henry Marmaduke still lived.

CHAPTER XXXIX

IN THE STILL WOODS

DIANA went out into the street. The moon was swinging low, the night was old. Distantly she heard the horsemen returning from the pursuit.

"He will not look for me here," she said to herself. "He will come to the house — the little house, where he told me to stay."

She began to walk fast, and then to run, going down the highway by the railroad. She did not know how long she ran, or how far; her breath came short, she walked till it was free again, and then she ran once more, and so on in the moonlight, walking and running, till she saw what she was looking for — a wide meadow near the creek, with a solitary cedar in the midst of it.

Into the meadow she plunged boldly. Her feet were heavy with weariness, and she tripped and fell, but she gathered herself and went on. With the great cedar as a landmark she hurried through the field, pressing toward the dark woods. At the edge of the grove there came over her a passing wave of faintheartedness, for it was weird and somber within, but she pushed on, looking eagerly for the light of the house. There was no light, and

the deep woodland had fully enclosed her before she remembered that Marmaduke had covered the fire.

It was the second time in her life that Diana had found herself at night in the woods, alone. The other time, that bitter night when she went to Eagle Bend, had remained in her memory as an ordeal of terror. But now, though the place was filled with darkness, broken only by straggling shafts of moonlight, she wondered at her own temerity; she was strangely unafraid. The woods rose around her, hushed, secure and friendly. Great pines and poplars towered above her; the ground was covered with leaves and pine needles beaten by winter rains into a thick friable carpet that broke under her feet. The smell of the wild plum blossoms permeated the cool mild air; she never smelled it afterward but with a thrill. She saw the moonlight falling on the flowering redbud, and once she came suddenly upon the service tree, beautiful and strange in the night, a ghostly cloud of bloom. Now a faint wind stirred the tree tops, now it was still, except for the dropping of twigs, the crunch of her foot in the dead leaves, and the throb of her pulse in her ears, beating quick and loud. Her mind pulsed swiftly, too, but what with excitement and great fatigue her thoughts ran wild and turgid, so that she tried to steady herself with whispered words. "I am not frightened . . . That is but a shadow, it is

nothing . . . I will come to the road presently, then I can find the house. He will come for me there . . . I am not frightened . . . How gentle he was — how brave he is! . . . There is the light — no, it is a star . . . What will he say? Will he come soon? Oh, I must find the house — the little house!"

The slanting beams of moonlight vanished, the moon had set. A fresh wind stirred the boughs, birds twittered, and deep in the utterly dark woodland a cock crew, prescient of the dawn. But Diana did not know that day was coming. She moved about the woods in circles, groping with outstretched hands.

A little streamlet stayed her feet, running softly with an eager murmur. Along its banks the hylas stopped their shrilling, disconcerted by the rustle of her footsteps. Diana knew that she was lost, but the fact seemed immaterial, like the news of the surrender. The trunk of a great tree pressed against her extended palm as she turned away from the stream; she sank down at the base of it. It was now more than a day and a night since she had slept; she had not realized how tired and faint she was. Feeling between the great roots, she found a place to rest, half reclining against the treetrunk. Last autumn's leaves and the leaves of many other autumns were gathered thick in that sheltered place, and the feel of the soft bed ran sweet and tingling

through her weary limbs. One by one the hylas, reassured by the silence of the intruder, took up their friendly piping.

And now a wanness came into the treetops, a faint silver grayness stole into the aisles of the woods, and Diana could make out uncertainly the boles of the trees. She could dimly see her hands, too, and her hair tangled about her neck and shoulders, and she bethought her of the strange figure she would make in the coming day. Sitting up a little she parted her hair and then, leaning back against the tree, she began to plait it into two great loose braids upon her bosom. One thick mass thus ordered she took up the other, watching under drooping eyelids the stealing dawn, and smiling upon it with the gladness of a child. "I must go on, presently," she whispered. "I must find the house — the little house."

But while her weaving hands were but half done with the task her lashes sank upon her cheek: her white fingers, interwoven with the dark strands, rested moveless on her breast. The day revealed her smiling as she slept.

Through the long hour between daybreak and the rising of the sun she slumbered deeply. Sparrows and warblers twittered about her, robins flitted and sang in the trees, wrens whistled clearly, and the hylas kept up their unwearied music by the stream.

The light grew clear in the woods; squirrels ran

down to the branch to drink, viewing the sleeping stranger with bright eyes of wonder. Near the brook was a spring with a broad-beaten path leading up through the woods. At the other end of the path was the woodland road and the little house.

And down this path came Henry Marmaduke, riding in the flame of the sun as it shone through the black trees; the level rays gleamed from his side-arms and illumined his face, he cast quick looks about him, eager and anxious. When his eyes at last fell upon her he gave no start, but his heart leaped wildly, as he slipped from the saddle and ran to her side.

In her sleep she had turned, drawing an arm over the root of the tree and resting her cheek upon it. Her cloak was torn and bedraggled with dew, her hands were scratched with briers, and her half-braided hair had curled and tumbled about her in her dreamful sleep; her face was flushed exquisitely with slumber and her red lips were slightly parted. He bent and kissed them. She opened her eyes and sprang up: for a moment she held him away, with her two hands, looking with wonder into his eyes. Then she dropped her head upon his breast. "Oh, I am so glad you have come!" she cried; her voice was broken and fluttering upon a sob.

"Dear heart, I have hunted for you for hours!"

"I knew you would come!" she said.

"My poor lost love!" he said.

"I was asleep here. I was dreaming. Oh, I am so glad you have come!"

"You spent the night in the woods!" he cried.

She shook her head and pressed it closer to his breast. "Oh, I am so glad you have come!" she repeated. "I was dreaming. I dreamed you came to find me, and went away, and I couldn't move or cry out to you. I dreamed you went away."

"I will never leave you," he said, passionately. "I love you."

She lifted her face, looking wildly through tears into his eyes. "Oh, do you — can you care for me — after all? for me — poor me?"

He drew her to him. "I love you, and I love you, and I love you! I tried to tell you how I loved you — in my letters — "

"I had your letters," she said. "I did not answer them because — " She broke off with a sob.

"Never mind why," said he, stroking her hair.

"But I must tell you! I tried to forget you. I thought I had fallen so in your esteem, and that you — oh, it's so hard to explain! My mind isn't clear — and it all seems so foolish and pitiful now."

"Perhaps I understand," said he.

"You can't understand, unless I make it plain. I thought you kept on telling me you wanted me because you thought it *right* — "

"Good God!" he said.

"And I didn't want you to come to me that way.

I was wounded, and I was proud. I know you will understand that, for you are proud, too, are you not?" she asked, imploringly. "I thought I could get over it. I tried to, so hard. But I didn't know," she went on, "I didn't know, until last night that I could never get over it.— And your letters!" She tugged at a packet in her bosom. "Oh, Henry, here are my lover's letters — see — they have kept my heart warm!"

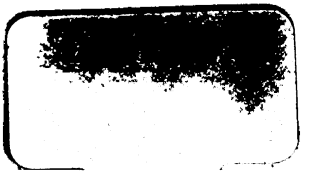
"You were always my own love," he said. "What I have done was because of you: always you were my inspiration, my beautiful dream, my heart's desire. Now this weary fight is lost, I must begin all over again. Oh, will you help me, Diana? I know it is a poor time to ask it — the hour of defeat — but will you forgive me this — and all the blunders that made you want to forget me?"

"Ah, Henry, there is nothing to forgive, but if there were, it would be the same. I would forgive you any earthly thing," she said. "I love you."

"Then marry me," he cried, impetuously, his voice trembling with eagerness. "Today all that I have fought for in this war is utterly wrecked and destroyed. Is it too wild a thing to ask of you, to have it for my own? Today, beloved — let it be our wedding day!"

"I will, if that be your desire," she said, flushing with a pretty dignity. The sun shone into the depths of her great eyes, he covered them with kisses.

Beyond the woods there rose a sound of voices, and then for the last time the bugles of the cavalry pealed the Assembly. He turned from her and mounted, wheeling his horse to her side. Then he braced himself firmly in the stirrup. "Come, Diana, we will go." She raised her face, wondering and sweet: he leaned to pass his arm about her waist. "Up with you!" he said, with a happy laugh, and he lifted her upon the saddle. "I have a horse for you at the village. We will go home to Tennessee."

"To Tennessee, with you!" she cried joyously, warming herself in his arms. She turned for a moment to look back with shining eyes at the little house and the friendly place of her night's adventures. And then they rode away together, leaving the sunlit woodland with the robins singing, and the hylas still piping to the little creek.

THE END.